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IN THE



# LAND OF FLOWERS.

By WALTER N. PIKE.



“ Know ye the land of the Cedar and Vine,  
Whose scented flowers blossom and beams enshrine ;  
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,  
Wax faint o'er the gardens of beautiful bloom ? ”

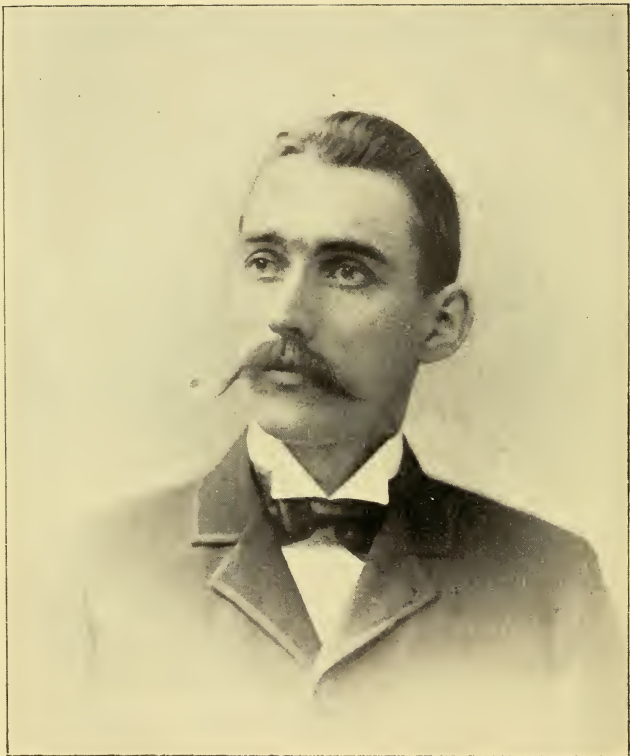


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*Yours Truly,  
Walter A. Pike*



# IN THE LAND OF FLOWERS

A SERIES OF REVISED SKETCHES  
WHICH FIRST APPEARED IN  
"THE MAYFLOWER."

BY  
WALTER N. PIKE.

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### Ho for the Sunny South!

*Away from stern Winter's dominions,  
His cold, chilling mantle of snow;  
The flowers struck dead by his visage,  
His winds chanting dirges of woe.*

*Then away to the far sunny Southland,  
To traverse those regions so fair,  
Where the Summer ne'er ceaseth to linger,  
And the Orange bloom perfumes the air.*

*Where the glittering Rose in December  
Spreads its dazzling hues to the light,  
And the Lily, so pure and so fragrant,  
Displays its fair blossoms so bright.*

*Where the Pine, full of years and of honors—  
A huge, stately pillar—doth rise;  
Its roots firmly fixed in their places,  
Its top reared aloft in the skies.*

*Where the Liveoak, so tall and so spreading,  
Dispenses its generous shade;  
And waveth the Cabbage Palmetto,  
In tropical grandeur arrayed.*

*Where the dense, tangled growth of the forest  
A fabrie fantastical weaves,  
And twinkle the radiant sunbeams  
Through quivering branches and leaves.*

*There, safe from the Ice King's rude fetters,  
With hearts full of lightness and glee,  
We will fill up our life's happy measure  
And learn to be joyous and free.*

—Joshua Morris.

## CHAPTER I.

### The Gardens and Flowers of Jacksonville.

“ Oh! Florida, romantic land,  
Enraptured I thy praises sing,  
For nature smiles on every hand,  
And Winter is as fair as Spring.”

—Mrs. Jennie S. Perkins.



O State in all this vast Union possesses a more romantic, interesting and diversified history than Florida. From its discovery, early in the sixteenth century, by Juan Ponce de Leon, a romantic soldier noble of Spain, in his vain search for the chimerical “Fountain of Youth,” its history has been a continuous chapter of romantic occurrences, in which mystery and tragedy play not the least important parts. However, it is not my allotted task to trace its fascinating history, but to describe some of its most beautiful natural features, famous gardens and rare flora, both native and introduced, found within its borders, for the benefit of my readers.

The pleasing and very appropriate appellations of “The Land of Flowers” and “The Italy of America” have been applied to the State, and long since became synonymous with its name. Florida itself is euphonious, and even to those having no idea of its derivation it possesses a *flowery* suggestiveness, calling up visions of dreamy, tropical luxuriance, golden sunshine, sparkling, limpid waters, and singing birds. Ponce de Leon named the land Florida after the day of its discovery, which was *Pascua Florida*, or Flower Sunday.

The following chapters will deal wholly with the peninsular portion of the State, commonly termed South Florida, but for two reasons I shall devote this one to Jacksonville and vicinity; first, on account of the interesting and beautiful flora existing there, and

secondly, because it is the gateway to the State, through which pass nine-tenths of the people who enter its borders, and, naturally, these people are interested to know what is to be seen in this line at their first stop in this flowery land.

Anyone expecting to find a city of beautiful gardens and well-kept yards will, with a few notable exceptions, be disappointed in Jacksonville, and a casual observer might even aver that there are no flowers or plants there worthy of note; but let your true flower lover wander leisurely up and down the residence streets of the city, as I have often done, and many beautiful and wonderful plant-growths will be discovered that are a delight to a true lover of nature and a true indication of "what might be" if kindly hands were to plant, weed and cultivate.

The streets are mostly well shaded, principally by Water Oaks and Live Oaks, with here and there a specimen of that royal denizen of Southern forests, the *Magnolia grandiflora*, its wealth of burnished green foliage contrasting finely with its smooth, ash-gray trunk, and during its flowering season perfuming the surrounding atmosphere with its intoxicating sweetness. Specimens of the appropriately named Umbrella China tree (*Melia Azedarach umbraculiformis*) are plentiful, holding their marvelously symmetrical heads poised on polished, greenish-brown, columnar trunks. If in the Winter only the bare branches, standing erect like the braces of an umbrella frame, give evidence of its characteristic shape, for it is deciduous; but in Summer it presents a rounded head of deepest green foliage through which the sun cannot cast a solitary ray, and so perfect in form that it is difficult to believe it has not been clipped. In several yards may be seen specimens of the Cabbage Palmetto (*Sabal Palmetto*) of the South, a majestic fan-leaf Palm which has been likened to a huge feather-duster stood on end. Another plant which is equally distinct in appearance is the Spanish Dagger or Bayonet (*Yucca aloifolia*.) growing singly or in clumps on the lawns or in the fence corners, and bearing no resemblance to any growth of Northern climes. Its straight, simple or forked trunk is densely clothed with a mass of dark green, bristling, dagger-like leaves which suggest the word *tropical* more than any other. But if anything is needed to finish the impression, growing close by is a Century Plant (*Agave*.) the mammoth proportions

of which are at once the envy and despair of the Northern cultivator, whose specimen of the same species is growing in a six-inch pot or, perhaps, has arrived to the dignity of a keg. He sees before him a plant which five or six years ago was a tiny offset stuck out in the sand and left to shift for itself, now a gigantic specimen which would require a tub made from a hog's head to hold it. Its ponderous leaves, five or six inches in width and weighing several pounds apiece, radiate in all directions in fantastic curves, and the whole plant standing as high as a person.

Occasionally a house is passed draped from basement to eaves by a curtain of the evergreen *Bignonia picta*, which must present a picture of rare loveliness when studded with its large tubular mauve or violet flowers. I very distinctly remember in one yard a large Live Oak, up the body of which had climbed thrifty vines of English Ivy, and then hung in long, pendant streamers from the limbs, oscillating back and forth in every passing breeze. On a porch I noticed, trained up and around it, a plant of *Solanum Jasminoides grandiflora*, the vine and its branches aggregating many yards in length. Here and there a Date Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) holds erect its pinnate, bluish leaves in a majestic manner, and specimens of the extremely hardy Sago Palm or Japanese Fern Palm (*Cycas revoluta*) abound, some of them with stout stems surmounted by noble crowns of scores of leaves—specimens which at the North would command from \$50 to \$100 each. Of its near congener, the Coontie (*Zamia integrifolia*), a native of South Florida, at least one exceptionally fine specimen exists in the city. It must be an old, large and long-established root, for it supports an oval mound of foliage as large as a good-sized tub, and as an ornamental ranks second only to the *Cycas*.

A very popular plant with the residents, it would seem, is the St. John's Lily (*Crinum pedunculatum*), for it is growing in a large majority of the yards where an attempt is made to cultivate anything. This gigantic member of the Amaryllis family attains a height of five or six feet, with a corresponding breadth of magnificent foliage. It is almost constantly in bloom, except when cut down by untimely frosts, sending up stout scapes bearing immense umbels of from twenty to thirty, or more, large and very fragrant pure white flowers having purple anthers. The bulbs are large

and stump-like, from fifteen to twenty inches in circumference at the neck, and often extend into the ground to a depth of from one and one-half to two feet. When the bulb has attained a certain size it divides into two, these in turn and time also dividing, thus forming clumps of half a dozen or more individual bulbs, supporting an immense spread of foliage, among which there is almost always at least one head of flowers.

Several large clumps of these Lilies grace the little square magniloquently termed the City Park. Here, too, are dense clumps of a species of Bamboo—probably *Bambusa Metake*—which presents a strange appearance to Northern eyes not accustomed to seeing grass grow large enough for fishing rods. Palms, Oaks, Sour Oranges, Oleanders, Cedars and Century Plants form the principal growth of this little park, which might be made into a spot of exceptional beauty.

A very interesting place to visit is the one-time Sub-Tropical Exposition buildings and grounds. Here, both inside and out, are growing many rare and choice plants, silent but eloquent monuments to the revered memory of the lamented P. W. Reasoner, the enthusiastic young horticulturist who had the interests of the State so warmly at heart and labored so assiduously for its horticultural advancement. Among the objects of especial interest here are some enormous specimens of the Century Plant, and a fine example of the Fish-Tail Palm (*Caryota urens*.)

Mrs. Mitchell has a beautiful garden in the suburbs, containing many plants noted for their great beauty, rarity or unusual interest. Among the latter class are some magnificent specimens of the true Tea Plant (*Camellia Thea*,) which, with their rich evergreen leaves and myriads of single white flowers with numerous yellow stamens, are no less beautiful than interesting. In some Jacksonville yards the Tea Plant is employed to form a beautiful ornamental hedge, and in the height of the flowering season the intermingling of white, gold and green must be exquisite.

## CHAPTER II.

### The Palms or Palmettoes of Florida.



HE Palms are undoubtedly the most striking objects among the exceptionally varied vegetable productions of the State of Florida. They are highly ornamental as well, and a never failing source of attraction for Northern eyes. Linnæus called Palms the "Princes of the Vegetable Kingdom," a designation which no one will venture to dispute, and Charles Kingsley wrote of them as follows: "For it is a joy forever, a sight never to be forgotten, to have once seen Palms breaking through, and, as it were, defying the soft, rounded forms of the broad-leaved vegetation by the stern grace of their simple lines; the immovable pillar-stems looking the more immovable beneath the toss, and lash, and flicker of the long leaves, as they awake out of their sunlit sleep, and rage impatiently for awhile before the mountain gusts, and fall asleep again. Like a Greek statue in a luxurious drawing room, sharp-cut, cold, virginal; shaming by the grandeur of mere form the voluptuousness of mere color, however rich and harmonious; so stands the Palm in the forest—to be worshipped rather than to be loved."

There are at least nine distinct species of Palms, representing six different genera, native of Florida; but of these, five are confined to the extreme southern portion of the State. The other four extend to the northern boundary, and beyond, but few tourists see more than two of these, the other two being confined to the swamps and thick hardwood forests termed hammocks, to distinguish them from the open Pine woods which occupy nearly all the rest of the land.

The most conspicuous and noteworthy of these four is the Cabbage Palm or Palmetto (*Sabal Palmetto*), famous from well-known historical associations, and for the imperishability of its wood



under water, being proof against even that scourge of Southern waters, the teredo. It possesses a subtle mysteriousness which is both awesome and irresistible, and the beholder is reminded more forcibly by it than by any other arborescent vegetation, that he or she has left the region of ice and snow far behind and is fast entering the realm tropical. As it rears aloft its rounded head it instantly attracts and holds the attention from its total dissimilarity to the vegetation by which it may be surrounded. It exceptionally, with great age, attains a height of eighty to ninety feet, the rough gray trunk only eight or ten inches in diameter and shooting aloft bare as a ship's mast except for the feather duster-like head of fan-shaped leaves which crowns its apex. Until it reaches ten to twenty feet in height, the bases of the dead leaf stalks remain upon the trunk, forming a unique *cheval-de-frise*, adding greatly to its picturesqueness. These leaf bases are ranged around the trunk with perfect mathematical precision, and as the trunk swells in growth these sheathing bases are split up one-half or two-thirds their length, which gives the tree the appearance of being surrounded by an exceedingly curious and highly ornamental lattice-work. This natural trellis is often taken possession of by some aspiring vine which soon mounts to the top of the Palm and weaves for it a mantle of emerald ornamented with flowers of richest hues. Between these persistent leaf-bases and the trunk proper, there is a thick layer of beautiful brown fibre, in which two species of Ferns are often found growing high up above the ground. One of these is *Vittaria lineata*, a most curious Fern, utterly unlike any northern species. The fronds are linear, from a few inches to two feet in length, pendulous, and the plant resembles a tuft of dark green grass hanging from the side of the tree. The other species is *Polypodium aureum*, a noble plant with large glaucous fronds. It has a stout root-stalk which runs about in the fibre, and it is not an unusual sight to see the beautiful fronds depending in a circle from beneath the crown of Palm leaves, twenty-five or thirty feet above the ground. *Ophioglossum palmatum*, a tropical Fern with curiously forked, fleshy leaves, is rarely found growing in the decaying sheathing bases of the leaves of this Palm. As the tree advances in age its growth is slow, the leaf stalks and fibre rot and fall off, leaving a slim, rough trunk strikingly like a telegraph



pole. It derives its common name from the fact that the undeveloped leaf bud in the centre of the crown of the tree, is often cooked and eaten, equaling in flavor the finest Cabbage; but the life of the tree is sacrificed for every bud taken.

The Saw or Scrub Palmetto (*Serenoa serrulata*) is the most common Palm in Florida. Often the Pine woods are carpeted with it for miles in every direction, and its very numbers render the scene monotonous. But an individual specimen, considered by itself, is beautiful, and in Europe it is highly valued for pot culture. The leaves are circular in outline, fan-shaped and bright green. The slender leaf-stalks spiny-edged—hence its common name of Saw Palmetto—the trunk creeping and rooting on the under side, rendering it very difficult to remove when clearing the land. When growing in shady hammocks the trunk often assumes an upright position, sometimes eight or ten feet high, and is then a very ornamental and striking object.

In rich hammocks is found the beautiful Dwarf Palmetto (*Sabal Adansonii*,) an extremely hardy Palm, resisting unharmed a temperature as low as ten degrees Fahr. The short stem is entirely under ground, the dark, rich green fan-shaped leaves are borne on short, smooth-edged stalks, and the graceful flower stalk rises above the leaves to a height of six or seven feet.

In the same locations, and in wet swamps, the Blue Palmetto or Needle Palm (*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*) abounds. It is an extremely beautiful species, and listed in European catalogues at very high prices, owing to its comparative scarcity. The leaves are very beautiful, shining green above and silvery gray below, deeply slit into narrow ribbons and borne on slender, graceful stems. Around the bases of these stems bristle numerous slender, keenly-pointed brown spines about fifteen inches long, mingled with a quantity of hairy fibres. These spines are undoubtedly a wise provision of nature to preserve from harm the flower-bud, which resembles a large snowy white egg nestling among the fibres, and which but for this protection would probably be eaten by animals.

The Royal Palm (*Oreodoxa regia*,) the "Glory of the Mountains," and the *Palma real* of the Spanish West Indies, one of the grandest of pinnate-leaved Palms, is native in several localities of extreme South Florida. Capt. Mayne Reid gives the following

graphic pen picture of this Palm: "Close by the Cotton-tree stood another giant of the forest—rivaling the former in height, but differing from it as an arrow from its bow. Straight as a lance, it rose to the height of an hundred feet. It was branchless—as a column of polished malachite or marble—up to its high summit, where its green, feather-like fronds, radiating outward, drooped gracefully over, like a circlet of reflexed ostrich plumes. The noble 'Mountain Cabbage' of Jamaica, the kingly *Oreodoxa*." Three noble specimens of this Palm once stood on Cape Sable and were visible eighteen miles out at sea. They were destroyed by the gale of 1872.

Perhaps the rarest Palm known to cultivation is Florida's recently discovered *Pseudophoenix Sargentii*. It was discovered in the Summer of 1886, on Elliott's Key, by Prof. A. H. Curtiss and Prof. C. S. Sargent. As it was sufficiently distinct to constitute both a new species and a new genus, it was given the above name by Prof. Wendland of Germany, the specific name being in honor of Prof. Sargent. It is a half dwarf species, never exceeding twenty feet in height, is pinnate-leaved, and somewhat resembles some species of *Phoenix*. The leaf-stalks drop off as soon as the leaves die, leaving a free, clean-looking trunk, the upper part marked with alternate rings of green and brown. It is known nowhere else in the world, and in but two small groves on the Keys (islands)—containing in all not over two hundred specimens. Several were destroyed by land clearers who were ignorant of its rarity.

The genus *Thrinax* is represented by at least three beautiful species, all confined to the coast or Keys of extreme South Florida, far below the lines of travel frequented by most tourists. The Prickly Thatch (*Thrinax parviflora*) is a most beautiful fan Palm, with slender, graceful stem and leaves, and attains a final height of thirty feet. The Silver Thatch (*T. argentea*) is of final greater size as respects stem and leaves, and the latter are silvery white on the under side. The third species is *T. excelsa*, with very large fan-shaped leaves, four to five feet long, and about the same in diameter, light green above and hoary glaucous beneath.

### CHAPTER III.

#### A Trip Up the St. John's River.

“ ‘ By St. John's romantic river,’  
Orange, Palms and Live Oaks grow,  
And cast down their fair reflections  
In the amber waves below ;  
And the Moonflower weaves around them  
Her green canopy of vines  
That are starred with snow-white flowers  
When the summer moonlight shines.”



TRIP to Florida, or a residence in this State, without a trip up or down that grand, sub-tropical river, the St. John's, is, to make use of an old and familiar comparison, like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. Nowhere in all this broad Union—north, south, east or west—may a more delightful trip be taken, or one which will leave a more pleasant and indelible impression upon the memory. True, there are more awe-inspiring scenes and greater height, breadth and depth in the views found in mountain regions; but the same are duplicated in many and widely separated sections of our vast domain, while there is but one Florida, and nothing resembling the St. John's is found outside its borders.

On the first day of May, 1562, Jean Ribaut crossed the St. John's bar and named the stream within in honor of that day, “La Riviere de Mai.” This name the Spaniards changed into San Mateo, but the river is now known as the St. John's. Taking its rise among the springs of southern Florida, it flows north for a distance, in all its twists and turns, of more than four hundred miles, to Jacksonville, where it turns eastward and empties into the Atlantic Ocean, twenty-five miles from that city; and for the greater part of this distance its banks are lined with a luxuriant sub-tropical vegetation, mingled with some familiar growths of temperate climes.

From its mouth to the city of Sanford it forms a liquid highway some two hundred and eighteen miles in length, navigable for large steamers, and its banks dotted at intervals by picturesque cities and villages, Orange groves and solitary residences. Near the sea it is a broad, majestic stream winding amongst marshes dotted with island-like mounds of higher ground clothed with Pines, Live Oaks and a variety of lower-growing vegetation, spots of deepest interest to the botanist.

Nearing Jacksonville the banks grow higher, rising in many places into bold bluffs crowned with residences and an occasional Orange grove. But thus far there is little suggestive of the tropics, except the deliciously soft, balmy air, the rounded heads of the Cabbage Palms, and the long gray moss festooning the limbs of the giant Live Oaks.

Although from Jacksonville to Sanford the distance on an air line is only a trifle over one hundred miles,—and by rail is only one hundred and twenty-five miles—by the river, owing to its innumerable windings, one hundred and ninety-three miles must be traversed. After rounding Grassy Point off Jacksonville, the average width of this grand stream for a distance of seventy-five miles south is more than three miles, widening at Green Cove Springs to five miles. Numerous small villages dot either side, and one—Mandarin—on the east bank, possesses special interest. Here, near the landing, and almost hidden among fine old Oaks and Orange trees, is the home of the celebrated authoress of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Mrs. H. B. Stowe. Thirty miles from Jacksonville is Green Cove Springs, noted for its magnificent sulphur spring. It is located in a wooded and picturesque hollow, and gushes forth 3,000 gallons of water per minute, clear and pure as crystal.

As the steamer glides on over the placid water the scenery becomes more varied. Orange groves appear in greater numbers, and as these are approached the golden, sunlit air pulsates with the wondrous song of that "winged mimic of the woods," the mocking bird. The river gradually narrows, vegetation grows thicker and more tropical, the scenery is wilder, and cranes, from snowy white to the common blue, as well as numerous other aquatic birds, are seen in the tall grasses along the shore, or running about on the Lily pads.

At last the boat enters what is called the Upper St. John's ; and here the scene becomes weird, beautiful and picturesque beyond description. In many places the river narrows to a width of only one hundred feet and winds and turns and curves like a gigantic serpent. The banks are lined with vegetation of the greatest luxuriance, and almost every individual growth is unfamiliar to the Northern eye. The Cabbage Palm, in every stage of its growth, rears aloft its noble form, growing down to the water's edge, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups, and sometimes in groves, to the exclusion of everything else ; the lordly Magnolia towers aloft in all its majesty of russet brown and emerald green, while the gentle zephyrs disclose in silver ripples the abiding places of the Sweet Bay ; the wet places are occupied by colonies of the funereal Cypress, with huge buttressed trunks and attendant swarms of curiosity-provoking "knees," the plummy boughs, so high aloft, silhouetted against a sky as deeply and intensely blue as the waters beneath are dark ; vines of many genera and species run riot, binding bush to bush and tree to tree in an inextricable tangle, from which peeps forth, here and there, a brilliant blossom gleaming like the flash of the wing of some gorgeous feathered songster of the tropics ; long silvery strands and waving banners of Spanish Moss are draped from every limb with a prodigal profuseness afforded only by a nature whose resources are inexhaustible, and, while strongly emphasizing the weirdness and unique beauty of the scene, tends to vary and lighten the mass of vegetation which at times becomes oppressive from its very density and luxuriance. Mrs. Jennie S. Perkins, in her beautiful poem, "Summer on the St. John's," the first verse of which heads this article, draws the following exquisite picture of the scene :

" Moss-veiled trees, like nuns enshrouded,  
All in grey in silence stand ;  
Through the boughs the golden sunbeams  
Drop their crosses on the sand.  
Stealing through the solemn stillness  
Gentle murmurs fill the air,  
Like the penitential sighing  
Of the holy monks at prayer."

Anon the boat glides past the mouth of some little tributary stream flowing through a perfect archway of never-fading green, up which may be caught a momentary flash of the flaming blossoms

of *Hibiscus coccinea*. The northern *Lobelia cardinalis* mingles its glowing wands with the white Lily-like umbels of *Crinum americanum*, while the delicious sweetness of innumerable Spider Lilies rises like incense upon an already perfume-laden atmosphere. And so the scene continues until the steamer emerges into Lake Monroe, every bend and curve revealing new beauties and new combinations, the whole forming a picture the impression of which will never fade from the mind's eye.

Nothing can be conceived of more beautiful and soul-inspiring than the St. John's by moonlight. Nowhere have I seen Luna shine with such clearness and brilliancy as in this fair clime, thereby greatly intensifying all shadows and producing exceptionally weird and beautiful effects. Shining upon the rippling waters of this glorious stream, the steamer seems to be gliding along a pathway of molten silver, between walls of verdure sparkling with the frost-white blossoms of the Moonflower. Gen. Grant, at the close of a day and moonlight night on this river, said: "In all my journey round the world I have seen nothing to equal this trip."

But if the river is transcendently beautiful by moonlight, it is inexpressibly weird and grand on a dark night, when the searchlight is brought into play to light up the steamer's course. The transformation is as marvelous as though produced by a magician's wand. The banks on either hand, and the water beneath seem to be gliding swiftly past, while every tree, shrub, vine and flower within a certain distance from the shore line, is thrown into startling relief upon a pall-like background of seemingly impenetrable darkness, and the curious floating Water Lettuce appears like lovely, snow-white Water-Lily blossoms drifting in a sea of ink.

I cannot close this feeble attempt at describing this beautiful river in a more fitting manner than by quoting the closing stanza of Mrs. Perkins' poem:

"Dark and shadowed are the forests,  
Weird and tropic is the gloom,  
All above is dreamy splendor,  
All below is scent and bloom.  
'Where St. John's romantic river'  
Rolls in grandeur silently,  
Nature plants her fairy gardens  
From his sources to the sea."

## CHAPTER IV.

### Wonderful Plant Growths in Florida.

“There is continual spring and harvest there,  
For all the plants do scented blossoms bear;  
Among the shady leaves, their sweet delight  
Throw forth such dainty odors day and night.”



EW objects impress the tourist or newcomer to Florida with more amazement and delight than the great size attained here in the open ground by many of their favorite pot plants of the North. Very many plants which, under pot culture, give no indications of being other than dwarfs by nature, are, in reality, quite the opposite when surrounded by environments conducive to their full development. Many of the most treasured pets of the northern conservatory or window garden find in a Florida garden perfect congeniality of soil and temperature, and rapidly assume proportions which seem almost incredible to a Northern flower lover and cultivator.

A striking illustration is furnished by many varieties of Roses. Here the Everblooming sorts are as hardy as the Hybrid Perpetuals or Mosses at the North, and if given a little attention annually in the way of fertilizing, pruning and cultivating, they soon attain enormous proportions, and literally load themselves with flowers. Safrano, Isabella Sprunt, La France, Catherine Mermet, etc., eight feet high and equally as broad, bending under a combined weight of hundreds of buds and blossoms, are not unusual and are not the largest sizes attained by any means. The old Agrippina and Pink Daily Roses are very common in this state, and one or both are to be found in the yard of almost every native Floridian. They are *everblooming* in every sense of the word, never being without flowers, though produced in greater profusion at certain seasons. I know of a specimen of each of these Roses, growing in the same



yard, which have attained unusual size and are really wonderful objects to behold. The Agrippina has a stem twenty-four inches in circumference, is nine and one-half feet high, and the entire bush fifty-four feet in circumference. It is of regular oval shape, and when I saw it a bushel of Roses could have been cut from it and not been missed. The Pink Daily has a tree-like stem nearly six inches in diameter, but the bush is not so regular in shape as the Agrippina. Another party has a Tea Rose (probably Phoenix,) which is eight and one-half feet high and fourteen feet wide.

But Marechal Niel, when budded or grafted on some strong-growing sort, makes a growth which casts all the above quite into the shade. When the stock is a congenial one, this exquisite Rose will run like a grapevine, soon clambering to the ridge-pole of a two-story building and producing bushels of its golden globes of exquisite perfume and often of immense size. While the flowers are slow to develop, they are very persistent, remaining in good form for a long time, often until they wear out. A neighbor possesses a remarkably fine specimen of this Rose. It is five years old, the main stem is seven inches in circumference, and the plant covers about thirty feet square, but would have covered at least fifty feet square had it not been kept cut back. The owner is sure that if let grow, and a trellis made for it, in three years it would cover one-half acre of ground. It blooms more or less every month in the year, but in February, March and April it bears a full crop of flowers, having as many as three hundred Roses at one time.

Those familiar with the Lantana as a pot plant only can hardly conceive of the wonderful proportions to which it attains here in the open ground, its marvelous rapidity of growth and prodigal profusion of bloom. A small plant set out in the poorest soil will attain a height of four or five feet, with a spread of ten feet, inside of a year, and be completely covered with flowers nearly all the time. If cut down by frost it soon sprouts up stronger than ever, and goes on increasing in size from year to year. We have a row of these plants which have developed into an unbroken hedge ten feet wide and six feet high. When in bloom, butterflies constantly hover about, and the blue-black berries are as eagerly sought and devoured by the mocking-birds. One of my correspondents in this State has a Lantana bush ten feet high, with a spread of thirty-one



feet! How would some of our Northern sister flower lovers fancy the task of lifting and potting such a giant?

This same correspondent possesses a remarkably fine plant of the Malayan Jessamine (*Rhyncospermum Jasminoides*), a choice evergreen climber often cultivated in pots at the North. It was set out fifteen years ago, and is trained up a stout lightwood pole ten inches in diameter and twenty-two feet high, stuck full of pegs two feet long. The main stem is now ten and one-fourth inches in circumference, and it covers the pole entirely with a mass of stems and its beautiful glossy foliage, from six to ten feet in diameter, and for weeks in the Spring the whole plant is a cloud of lovely white flowers, which fills the house and grounds with delightful fragrance.

*Russelia juncea*, or Coral Plant, as some call it, which has recently been brought prominently before the public, is another plant which makes a remarkable growth in this State and flowers almost the year round. An established plant is constantly sending up stout canes six or eight feet high, clothed with peculiar Rush-like branches and myriads of tubular, coral red flowers. Many of the canes are simply great plumes or ropes of flowers, bending and swaying under their own weight of loveliness. When allowed its own sweet will the branches droop until their tips touch the earth, into which they quickly root and send up fresh shoots, these in turn taking root and the plants spreading over a considerable space of ground. I have been told of a specimen which, left unmolested for some years, attained a height of twelve or fifteen feet and covered a space twice as large as the ground floor of a good-sized dwelling house.

Nearly all members of the Amaryllis family grow to perfection in this State, requiring little or no care after planting out, and some species of *Crinum* attain a great size, and produce an immense number of flowers. On our grounds there is a fine specimen of *Crinum augustum*, or "Grandolia," as it is called in some localities, which would astonish the cultivator of ordinary Amaryllis. The neck of the bulb is twenty-seven inches in circumference at the surface of the ground, and extends below the surface at least two feet. From this bulb there radiates upward and outward thirty-three luxuriant leaves, the longest ones measuring five feet and ten

inches from base to tip, and seven and one-half inches wide at the broadest part. The ends of these leaves droop downward in a very graceful and symmetrical manner, and as the plant stands, without straightening up the ends of the leaves, it measures five feet and three inches in height, and six feet and three inches through the top or spread of leaves. It is almost constantly in bloom, and the umbels of buds and open flowers are often larger than a half bushel measure. But this bulb has been planted only about three years. An old and long-established bulb has produced an umbel of flowers so large that when carried in a covered buggy *it completely hid the person in the seat.*

Space will not admit of descriptions of all the plants which attain to unusual proportions in Florida, and I can only briefly mention a few more of the most notable examples. Oleanders thrive like weeds, and quickly attain to the dimensions of respectable sized trees. Specimens, with trunks two feet in circumference, twenty-five or thirty feet high, and even forty feet through the top, are not unusual. The Chinese Hibiscus is equally at home here, though more susceptible to frost, and frequently attains a height of twelve or fifteen feet with a spread of ten or twelve feet. *Begonia rubra* has been trained over the front door of a house, and even along the ceiling of the veranda, producing clusters of flowers as large as a child's head, and hanging on the plant for six months. *Solanum Jasminoides grandiflora* will completely cover a whole veranda, and be white as snow with flowers; the Rose Geranium grows six or eight feet high, and ten or more feet across; a plant of *Justicia coccinea* has attained a width of nine and one-half feet and seven and one-fourth feet high, and the Plumbagos grow ten feet high and wide. All of these plants produce flowers in quite as wonderful profusion as the size they attain to; but the blue ribbon must be awarded to an *Allamanda Hendersonii*, which during a season of five months produced a total of about twelve thousand flowers, there being from two to three hundred open every day.

## CHAPTER V.

### Silver Spring and its Romantic Legend.



WITHIN the borders of Florida are found many remarkable and beautiful springs, but the most wondrous and world-famed of them all is Silver Spring, located in Marion county, about five miles east of the city of Ocala. This spring, like some others in the State, is remarkable for its great size and depth and the immense volume of water which it constantly discharges, forming a navigable river up which good-sized steamers ply into the spring itself. In or connected with this spring are several deep basins or pools known locally as the "Head," "Bridal Chamber," "Bone Yard," etc., and the combined waters of these forms Silver Spring Run, which extends between wooded banks for a distance of six miles, when it mingles with the dark waters of the Ocklawaha river, a tributary of the St. John's.

But the most remarkable phenomenon connected with Silver Spring is the marvelous transparency of the water, surpassing the wildest flights of the imagination and quite beyond the belief of those who have never visited the place. Although the maximum depth of the water in the "head spring" or "pool" and adjacent springs is from sixty to ninety feet, every feature and configuration of the bottom is as distinctly visible as though gazing through a clear atmosphere instead of water. In some places the bottom is covered with a luxuriant growth of fresh water Algæ, while in others it is wholly clear of vegetation and is composed of limestone and white sand. Here are fissures in the limestone through which the water is seen boiling up. These fissures are filled with sand and comminuted limestone, and the agitation thereof by the ascending currents of water produces a milk-white appearance about the crevices.

Gazing into the depths below from the side of a boat floating

over the surface, on a clear and calm sunny day, one seems suspended in mid-air, viewing beneath an ever-changing panorama of darting fish, subaqueous vegetation waving to and fro, boiling springs, swaying Algæ, etc., beautiful beyond description and making a powerful and lasting impression upon the imagination. The sunlight tinges each object with prismatic hues, and by some strange, weird, magnifying property of the waters, objects are enlarged and seem so near as to render it difficult to realize the actual depth of the water. Fish which seem within easy reach are, in reality, resting safe far below the range of a long-handled spear, and if a dime or other bright object be dropped in, it may be watched slowly settling in the depths, with prismatic changes and flashings of light, and seemingly growing larger as it sinks. I know it will seem impossible to my readers when I state that a tiny piece of white paper the size of a silver three cent piece or even smaller, lying at the bottom of the spring is as distinguishable as though within a foot of the eye, and even the V on a nickel five cent piece is plainly discernable, but it is true. An ordinary store sign has been sunk in the spring and lies on the bottom face up. From the deck of the steamer, as it moved across the surface of the spring, I read the name on the sign as easily as though it lay on the deck at my feet instead of under more than sixty feet of water clearer than air. Although the sign is one of the most ordinary cheap affairs, such as appear on small country stores, the wondrous powers of the water renders it positively beautiful, for the letters and the board on which they are painted, are bordered or edged with prismatic hues like miniature rainbows. And every blade of grass or other object in the spring, is bordered with the same exquisite colors and tints.

When the steamers enter the spring after nightfall they carry lighted torches, which produces an effect more weird and wonderful than the most vivid imagination is able to picture. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe paints the following vivid pen picture of such an entrance: "We seemed floating through an immense cathedral, where white marble columns meet in vast arches overhead and are reflected in the grassy depths below. The dusky plumes of the Palmetto waving above, lit by torchlight, looked like fine tracery of a wondrous sculptured roof. The brilliant underwhite of the

Bay leaves, the transparent red of the Water Maple, and the soft velvet feathers of the Cypress, had a magical brilliancy as our boat passed through the wooded isles. The reflected fire-light gave the most peculiar effect. The gray moss that streamed down seemed like draping veils of silver and was of wonderful profusion. Clouds of fragrance were wafted to us from Orange groves along the shore; and the transparent depth of the water gave the impression that our boat was moving through the air. Every pebble and aquatic plant we glided over seemed, in the torchlight, invested with prismatic brightness. What a sight was that! There is nothing on earth comparable to it!"

Like most places of unusual natural beauty and interest, Silver Spring has its Indian legend. In substance it is as follows: Okahumkee, who was king over the tribes of Indians who roamed and hunted about the northwestern lakes, had a daughter called Wenonah, who was the pride of his life. She possessed rare beauty, and had a wealth of raven tresses which fell about her beauteous form like a silken robe, reflecting back the sunlight with wondrous effect. Chiefs and warriors vied with each other in the performance of brave feats, in the hope of winning the hand of this forest belle; but Wenonah had, in the meantime, seen and loved Chuleotah, a renowned chief of the tribe which dwelt among the wild groves of Silver Spring. Small wonder that Chuleotah stirred the depths of dusky Wenonah's heart, for he was not only a famous chief, but a magnificent type of physical manhood and possessed of unusual intelligence and bravery.

But between the tribes of Okahumkee and Chuleotah there existed a deadly feud, and no sooner did the former learn of his daughter's love for the hated chief, than he gathered his warriors and marched forth to give him battle. In the fight which followed Chuleotah was slain by Okahumkee. As soon as Wenonah learned that her lover was dead she flew to the Crystal Fountain, which had been a favorite trysting place, and upon its still bosom beheld the pale spirit of Chuleotah beckoning to her. With this cry upon her lips: "Yes, my own, my loved one, I come!" she plunged into the crystal waters and joined her lover in the happy hunting grounds. The long, green filaments of moss and fresh water *Algae* growing from the white sands in the bottom of the spring,

moving to and fro in the sunlight which they reflect in many bright hues, are the loosened braids of Wenonah's hair, from which the beauteous reflections of sun and moonlight are the chief glory of the spring.

While gazing into its crystal depths and musing on the romantic legend connected with it, comes the thought whether this may not be the spring the gallant old Spaniard, Ponce de Leon, heard of; the magical Fountain of Youth which he searched Florida in vain to discover. It may be that it was the fame of this identical spring which reached his ears, leading to one of the most romantic episodes in the early history of this country.

The water in Silver Spring Run, from its source to where it joins the black flood of the Ocklawaha, is nearly as transparent as in the spring, and a boat ride up or down its length is a charming experience. In some places it is shallow and the bottom thickly covered with aquatic vegetation; in others the current has scooped out great pools, twenty, thirty, even fifty feet in depth—though the inexperienced would guess the water not over six to ten feet deep—the bottom covered with white sand which, however, looks bluish through the water. Great fish lie or glide about in these pools, paying not the slightest attention to boat or steamer, though they *seem* as though within two or three feet of the surface. Along the banks *Lobelia cardinalis* mingles its fiery bloom with the snowy whiteness and sweetness of *Crinum americanum* and other wild flowers, and if the day is a warm one, an alligator may very likely be surprised taking his sun-bath on an old log.

There are two ways of reaching this famous spring. One is by steamer from Palatka via the St. John's and Ocklawaha rivers, a marvelous trip described in the following chapter; the other by the Florida Central and Peninsular Railroad, the great trunk line of Florida. The depot is built over the edge of the spring, and the north and south bound trains meet here at noon and stop nearly a half hour for dinner and a view of this interesting wonder; but one may profitably spend hours, or even days, here in examining and admiring this remarkable phenomenon of nature.



## CHAPTER VI.

### On the Wondrous Ocklawaha.



THE most singular stream of water in the United States is undoubtedly the Ocklawaha river. Such a combination of weirdness, beauty and enchantment, oftentimes combined with utter desolation, as exists between the mouth of this river and Silver Spring, cannot be found in any other part of the United States. A tributary of the St. John's, all the beauty and fascination of that romantic river is here reproduced and intensified tenfold, and a trip up or down the Ocklawaha is an experience the memory of which will never be effaced from the mind that is at all impressional.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe in writing of a trip up this stream, rightly termed it "a visit to Fairy Land," and of her fellow passengers she said: "They returned from their trip fairly inebriated with enthusiasm and wild with inherent raptures. They had seen Europe, Italy, Naples and the Blue Grotto, but never, never had they in their lives seen aught so entrancing as this. It was a spectacle weird, wondrous, magical—to be remembered as one of the things of a lifetime." Of her own impressions of the Ocklawaha, she continues in her graphic style: "The boat glides on from hour to hour as the river winds and turns and doubles upon itself, with still the same flowery solitudes, reverberating with the same wild cries of birds, glittering with slanting sunbeams, festooned with waving garlands that hang from tree to tree."

This river has its source in the great Lake Apopka, and flows through Lakes Harris, Eustis, Griffin, etc., being navigable a distance of two hundred and forty-one miles. The Indian, with his characteristic fondness for the use of descriptive appellatives, gave it the musical and very appropriate name of Ocklawaha, meaning *winding water*. The significance of the name is fully appreciated

by the voyager on its dark waters, for between its mouth and the point where it is joined by the crystal flood of Silver Spring Run, a distance of about one hundred and ten miles, there are no less than nine hundred and seventy-six bends—the most of them very abrupt ones which the steamers round with some difficulty. Added to its tortuousness the channel is so narrow that the steamers plying on its surface are built in stories, one deck above another, looking like very narrow houses perched on a tug-boat with a big paddle wheel at the stern.

These steamers start from Palatka, on the St. John's river, and run to Silver Spring, a trip alone worth going any distance to take. Although Palatka and Silver Spring are only a trifle over fifty miles apart on an air line, by water the distance is one hundred and thirty-six miles, and it takes twenty-four hours to make the trip. The first twenty-six miles is on the bosom of the noble St. John's, between banks lined with beautiful Orange groves or clothed with Oaks, Pines, Magnolias, Water Maples, etc., every bay and cove filled with Water Lilies interspersed with the curious Water Lettuce, and the still more curious and beautiful Water Hyacinth which has become thoroughly naturalized and is constantly met serenely sailing about, as blown by the breeze, sometimes singly and sometimes in groups.

Presently the steamer's bow is headed for the seemingly unbroken line of the shore, but a slight opening in the solid wall of verdure appears, through which the steamer glides and enters the mystic Ocklawaha.

“Over our heads the towering, tenebrous boughs of the cypress  
Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air  
Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals;  
Death-like the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons,  
Home to their roosts in the cedar trees returning at sunset,  
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.”

At once begins a series of twists and turns that extend without interruption to the end of the journey, and at no time is the man at the wheel—in the pilot-house perched on the upper deck—motionless many moments in succession, for no sooner has the steamer labored around a sharp curve to the right, than the wheel must be reversed in order to make an equally abrupt turn to the left, and



this goes on unceasingly. On either hand the verdure is so near that it may be almost reached from the deck rail, and while rounding many of the bends of the river the branches of the trees brush the sides of the boat. At one point called Cypress Gate, formerly stood two immense Cypress trees growing exactly opposite each other on either bank, with just room enough between them for the steamer to pass through. One of them has been cut down, but the stump remains.

On top of the pilot-house is a large iron cage, and as night comes on this is filled with pine knots and set on fire to furnish light to steer by; and then what a scene is revealed and what a transformation! The flaring light casts a glow ahead and upon either hand, while in the darkness behind trails a comet-like tail of smoke and glittering sparks. By the artificial light the white trunks of the Magnolias look like polished columns of silver, the moss-draped crowns of the towering Cypress appear as if enshrouded in exquisite bridal veils, and the umbrageous Palms, feathery Ferns, trailing vines, lance-like reeds and waving water grasses combine to form silhouettes of wondrous designs and infinite variety.

A faint glow appearing on the distant sky and gradually drawing nearer, indicates that a down-stream steamer is approaching, and at the first convenient widening in the river-bed our boat is crowded close up to the bank, and fastened there, to await the arrival and passing of the other; and now occurs a magic scene, one impossible to fully describe. Nearer and nearer comes the approaching steamer, a line of fire among the tree tops marking her erratic course. Although but a short distance away on a direct line, the serpentine course of the river multiplies it many times. Like a demon spouting fire from its nostrils, the steamer labors through the intricacies of the labyrinth she is threading. Her illuminated form is now partially visible through the trees and every moment it seems as if she must burst into full view and pass, but as often is her bow suddenly turned from us and she plunges into the darkness of a piece of thick, intervening forest, to shortly reappear at a nearer point, but only to repeat this interesting game of hide-and-seek.

Finally she sweeps around the last bend of the stream and comes into full view, lights flashing from every door and window.

A dusky form casts an armful of pine knots into the blazing cage and ten thousand sparks shoot heavenward, rivaling in brilliancy the pyrotechnic display of a northern Fourth of July; the steamers salute, the ear-splitting blasts dying away in the distant solitudes of the primeval forest; the decks are crowded with enraptured tourists, and on the lower forward deck a group of darkies, with banjos, are singing, with the matchless melody of their race, "Way Down in Dixie." Only a moment the dazzling vision lasts ere it sweeps around the next bend, the lines of our own craft are cast off and the engine set in motion once more. So fascinating and unique is the ever-changing panorama of light and shadow effects that it is nearly midnight before the desire to sleep asserts itself.

In the early morning light much of the weirdness of the night scene is transformed into pictures of magic beauty. Sitting on the deck, a hundred strange forms of vegetation present themselves on every hand and every curve in the river reveals new beauties. Suddenly the moss veiled crowns of the towering Cypresses assume a roseate tinge that betokens the advent of sunrise. Rapidly it descends those immense trunks and presently, through the curtains of branch and leafage, the golden beams fall athwart the deck. Now they are shining from the right; a sudden curve in the river and they fall from straight ahead; another bend, and the sun shines from the left, and yet another curve and its rays fall from behind. Thus in half an hour's time the steamer's bow has indicated the four points of the compass.

Palms abound on every hand, holding their noble crowns aloft like the royal princes of the vegetable kingdom that they are, or beneath the shade of more aspiring growths hide the rich mold with myriads of cool green fans which are waved only by the winds of heaven. Trees, shrubs and vines, strange to Northern eyes, are on every side, forced into the greatest luxuriance possible by a soil of wonderful fertility. Thousands of *Crinum americanum* line the banks, thrusting above their lush, green foliage umbels of pure white, Lily-like flowers of exquisite beauty and fragrance. And so it continues. No pen can describe it, no imagination can picture it. It must be seen to be appreciated, and once seen it will live in the memory as long as memory itself endures.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Way Down on the Indian River.

"Thousands of flowers there are beaming,  
The verdure smiling, and the hushed waves dreaming;  
Each flower is still a brighter hue assuming,  
Each a fair league, the love-sick air perfuming."



QUALLY as interesting, wonderful and beautiful as the Ocklawaha—described in the preceding chapter—but in a different way, is the famous Indian River called by the Seminole Indian, in his liquid language, "*Tse-tsa-ta-hatchee*." It is a broad, beautiful stream that extends for one hundred and fifty miles along the eastern coast of South Florida, and in reality is more of a sound than a river, for it is an arm of the sea fed through narrow inlets, rising and falling with the tides and partaking of the brine and marine life of the great outlying ocean. With a channel two miles in width, it stretches

"Like a broad blue ribbon lying"

for a distance of one hundred miles without a curve, separated from the Atlantic by a narrow sand dune.

This long, straight stretch is the direct opposite extreme of the "winding water" of the Ocklawaha, but at a point known as the "Narrows," there are windings of the river bed, with curves and turns innumerable, duplicating the tortuousness of the latter stream, the banks clothed with a tropical tangle of Mangroves and vines—a jungle almost impenetrable, but beautiful and fascinating to look upon. The river is shallow, and the clean, sandy bottom visible through the clear water that is amber when looked through but beautifully blue when looked upon; and all along the shores are bordered with a stratum of soft, yellowish rock, a curious conglomeration of small shells, known as *coquina*.

Where the banks have not been denuded of their natural growth, they are clothed with a rich tropical forest of Palms,

Cypress, Oaks, Pines, numerous under shrubs and vines; and the alternating and intermingling of these with the never-fading green of the Orange, Lemon and Lime groves, the extensive Pineapple plantations and numerous residences and hotels, surrounded by strange tropical and semi-tropical fruits and brilliant flowering plants and shrubs, forms a rare scenic panorama of never-ending beauty and interest.

At some points there are whole forests of the lordly Cabbage Palm or Palmetto, lending a strange and truly tropical aspect to the landscape. All sizes and ages are represented, from the tiny seedling just sending its first baby leaf above the fostering mold, to the grand old specimens aged beyond the knowledge of man, with lithe, smooth boles shooting far up into space and ending in a feathery, rounded crown clearly outlined against the soft blue sky. One wanders beneath their shade awed by their majesty and grandeur, and strangely impressed by the mystic whispering of their rustling leaves and the evident strength of their slim, supple trunks which have successfully defied the sea winds for an untold age.

The surface of the stream is relieved, in places, by small islands—suggesting the “summer isles of Eden lying in the dark purple spheres of sea”—little green gems that have been styled “emerald globes in a fairy lake.” Surrounded by Mangroves and crowned by a few waving Palms, these rocky islets afford a welcome retreat and nesting-places to the numerous sea birds that frequent the river. Here, too, may be seen the strange anomaly of oysters growing on trees, a statement that sounds ridiculous, but is, nevertheless, true. When the tide recedes, the luscious bivalves are exposed adhering to the curious stilt-like and much forked aerial roots of the Mangroves, and they may be gathered into a basket much the same as fruit is gathered from bushes or trees.

In the vicinity of the shores of the river there are many ancient shell mounds, mute reminders of a departed people, which doubtless contain relics of much value and absorbing interest to the archæologist; and the out-cropping, wave-washed stratum of *coquina* stands ready to yield up, under the stroke of the geologist's hammer, its quota of the history of the rise of this fair land above the blue waters of the surrounding ocean and Gulf.

Only from three to five miles west of this river winds the waters of the upper St. John's, and probably nowhere else in the known world is this curious phenomenon duplicated—two rivers in such close proximity, the one flowing north, the other south, one fresh, the other salt, and both finding an outlet on the same coast and into the same ocean, but at points more than two hundred miles apart. Until the winter of 1893-4, the waters of the Indian River formed the only highway to the region through which it runs and to the tropical wonders and beauties of the famous Lake Worth region, where the Cocconut Palm grows in all its beauty and the Banyan-like Florida Rubber-tree astonishes all beholders by its eccentric growth.

The Indian River region has always been famous for its fine fruits. Around the upper part of the river are some of the oldest and finest Orange groves in the State, and Lemons, Limes, Citron and Grape Fruit abound in perfection. Besides these, there are grown in more limited quantities semi-tropical and tropical fruits that are rarely, if ever, seen in Northern markets. Most plentiful is the Guava, with its musky scented and flavored fruit, so delicious to all who acquire a taste for it. The Sapodilla or Naseberry (*Achras sapota*.) a tree with beautiful broad, glossy leaves, ripens its fruit, which may be compared to a Russet Apple, with the taste of a rich, sweet, juicy Pear, with granulated pulp. Another delicious fruit grown is the Sugar Apple or Sweet Sop (*Anona squamosa*.) The fruit resembles an inverted cone, or a small Pineapple minus the crown, is of a yellowish green color when ripe, the pulp very sweet and of the consistency of soft butter. The Mango (*Mangifera Indica*) and the Alligator or Avocado Pear (*Persea gratissima*) form large trees of striking aspect and great beauty, and produce fruit of much value.

But the chief fruit of this region, and the one for which it is becoming the most famous, is the Pineapple, the raising of which is becoming a business of great magnitude, and yearly bringing thousands of dollars into the State. Until within the past three or four years, Florida Pineapples were hardly a factor in the Northern markets; but last year the crop amounted to 50,000 or perhaps 60,000 cases, a case holding as much as a small barrel. The variety mostly raised for shipment is the Red Spanish or Strawberry, a

variety that stands transportation the best of any. When it is allowed to ripen on the plant it is a very fine fruit, but for shipping it is picked while yet hard and green, and ripens up in transit or after reaching market. Those who have eaten only such fruit have not the slightest conception of what the finer varieties, ripened on the plants, taste like. A well ripened specimen of the Egyptian Queen, Sugar Loaf or Porto Rico varieties will scent a whole field, and in flavor will bear out the assertion made by Jean de Lery, a Huguenot priest, more than three hundred years ago, as being of such excellence that the gods might luxuriate upon it, and that it should only be gathered by the hand of Venus.

Although rarely more than two sorts are ever seen in Northern markets, there are quite a large number of varieties differing in points of size, appearance and flavor. The Porto Rico, a very distinct sort and the largest of all, has been grown in Florida to weigh as much as sixteen or eighteen pounds, and other varieties not infrequently attain a weight of eight or ten pounds. The flesh of such Pineapples melt in the mouth, there being no core nor strings to reject, and no sugar is needed with them.

Pineapple plantations are abundant along the river, presenting every stage of growth, from the newly set plants to those bearing fruit, and the sight is an interesting one and would be decidedly novel to the resident of a colder clime. A plantation is made from "suckers," "slips" or "crowns." Suckers are vigorous young plants which come up from the root of the old plant, either before or while it is fruiting, and they will bear fruit in from one year to eighteen months after setting out. Slips come from under the base of the "apple"—as often seen on the fruit in market—and produce fruit in from eighteen months to two years. The crown, which is the growth on the top of the "apple," will fruit in about two years. Only one fruit is produced by a plant, which then dies and is replaced by the suckers springing from its root. Usually but one of these suckers is allowed to remain, the others being removed and set out to form individual plants. Little cultivation is given except to keep free of weeds.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### Oranges and Other Citrus Fruits.

"The Orange flower perfumes the bower,  
Breeze, bird and flower confess the hour."—*Scott*.

"Odors of Orange flower and spice  
Reached them from time to time,  
Like airs that breathe from paradise  
Upon a world of crime."—*Longfellow*.



HERE is no product of the soil for which Florida is so justly noted as the Orange, and her extensive groves are far-famed for their thriftiness and beauty and for producing the most deliciously flavored Oranges which reach the markets of the world. There exists in the minds of the majority, a world of romance and poetry in connection with Orange growing, and there is no other one tree or fruit possessing so all-absorbing an interest for the cultivator. It is not at all to be wondered at that all that is romantic or poetic in one's nature is stirred by this queen of fruit trees, for an Orange tree is intrinsically beautiful at all times. Its form of growth is symmetry perfected, and its crown of never fading verdure is of a dark, deep, rich green. If the tree never blossomed or bore fruit it would still be second in beauty to none; but when a sea of foamy white, deliciously fragrant blossoms breaks forth and bespangles every twig and leaf, like a fall of virgin snow, or when, later on, these flowers have been replaced by globes of shining gold gleaming, singly and in clusters, amid the dark green foliage, no more exquisitely beautiful an object ever gladdened mortal eyes.

From the fact that wild or sour Orange groves and single trees have been discovered in Florida, many believe them a natural, spontaneous production of the soil of the State. But this is a mistake, for nowhere is the Orange a native of the New World, and only

where the early Spanish or Portuguese landed and penetrated into the country is the Orange to be found growing wild in America. To the successors of Ponce de Leon, and to the French colony, massacred by Menendez, is undoubtedly due the credit of introducing the Orange to the coast country of Florida, and the Indians spread it through the interior.

With the exception of two or three Australian and one Japanese species, there is little doubt but the two or three parent types from which have sprung the different varieties of Oranges, Lemons, Limes, Citrons and Shaddocks, are of Asiatic origin; but the early history of this fruit is so buried in antiquity as to be almost completely lost. Galessio, an earnest naturalist, was the first one to trace its history with any degree of authenticity. The Arabs, according to this author, penetrating further into the interior of India than any foreign nation had done before, discovered the Orange family flourishing there, and they carried the sweet variety into Persia and Syria; and the bitter sort found its way into Arabia, Egypt, the North of Africa and Spain. From these points the fruit gradually spread to the various parts of the earth where it is now cultivated. The Orange was not known to the ancients either in Europe or Syria, and to the Arabians, whose anxiety, it is said, for the extension of medical and agricultural knowledge was almost equal to their zeal for the propagation of the Koran, must be given the credit of its introduction to the world.

Comparatively few people are aware of the host of forms of the Orange family (*Citrus*) that exists. Some idea of the number of the cultivated varieties, and the range of differences in size, form, color and taste of the fruits, is conveyed by the statement that in the "*Histoire Naturelle des Orangers*," a folio work by Risso and Poiteau (1818,) there are no less than one hundred and nine plates.

The Orange is noted both for its enormous bearing qualities and for its remarkable longevity. Wallace mentions a tree in St. Michael's that bore twenty thousand fruits in one crop; and in Florida, where the oldest trees are but the veriest babies, as it were, the famous "Big Tree" oftentimes has ten thousand Oranges at once. At Versailles a tree known as the "Grand Bourbon" is still growing, though planted in 1421, and the famous tree in the Convent of St. Sabina, at Rome, is said to be more than six hundred



years old, while, according to the Treasury of Botany, "In Cordova, the noted seat of Moorish grandeur and luxury, in Spain, there are Orange trees still remaining which are considered to be six hundred or seven hundred years old." Even in England, at Hampton Court, where the trees are grown under glass, there are several which are over three hundred years old.

*Citrus aurantium*, is the type of the Sweet Orange, and from it have sprung an ever increasing number of more or less distinct varieties varying in size, appearance, flavor and time of ripening. The Sour and Bitter-Sweet Oranges are included under *C. aurantium Bigaradia*. The Sour is *very* sour, and makes a delicious ade; the Bitter-Sweet is, as its name implies, bitter and sweet combined, and is very refreshing in summer. Its flowers also furnish the Neroli oil, which is so delicious and costly as a perfume. *C. aurantium nobilis* furnishes the variety known variously as Mandarin, Tangerine (having a deep, Tomato-colored rind,) Willow-leaved and Kid-glove. The latter name is given because the skin is so loose that it may be removed and the Orange eaten without soiling one's gloves. The trees are dwarf, with small, Willow-like leaves, and are exceedingly ornamental. *C. aurantium Bergamium* is the true Bergamot. From the rind of its fruit the fragrant Oil of Bergamot is obtained, and the flowers also yield oil. *C. decumana* is represented by the Shaddocks and Grape Fruit. The fruit of the former grow to an immense size, often ten to fourteen pounds in weight, and is watery and rather insipid in flavor. The Grape Fruit or Pomelo, is smaller fruited—but two or three times the size of an Orange—and greatly relished by all who learn how to properly eat it. At present it is a much better paying crop than the Orange. *C. medica cedra* is the Citron of commerce. In Florida it is grown only as a curiosity, despite the fact that no known reason exists why good citron cannot be grown and prepared here, and that 2,000,000 pounds of it are annually imported into the United States. *C. medica Limetta* furnishes the Limes, of which there are a number of varieties, and *C. Limonium* the numerous Lemons. *C. Japonica*, the Kumquat or Kin Kan, is a delightful little dwarf sort, much cultivated in China and Japan, producing fruits about the size of the first joint of the thumb, which are eaten rind and all, and made into sweetmeats by preserving in sugar.

*C. trifoliata*, native of Japan, is a very distinct sort, hardy at least as far north as New York City, and of great value for hedges, and to bud or graft and dwarf other sorts on.

Although the oldest city in the United States is located in Florida, it is only since the close of the civil war that the great Orange producing region of the State began to be settled up, and later still before attention was turned toward Orange growing. In 1885 the whole crop of the State amounted to but six hundred thousand boxes, while the crop of 1893 was five million boxes, and there are groves enough planted to produce in a few years twenty million boxes. Predictions of over-production in the near future are met by the interesting statement that the last crop would only furnish one Orange a month to each inhabitant of the United States, while a crop of twenty million boxes will furnish only one Orange a week to each.

There are many erroneous impressions concerning the Orange and its growth prevalent among those not familiar with the subject. One of these is that flowers and green and ripe fruit, in all stages of development, may be seen on an Orange tree at one and the same time and at almost any time of the year. Many writers make such statements; but they are not true, at least in Florida. The statement is true, however, of the Citron, Lemon and Lime, as they flower more or less almost every time they make a new growth, which is several times a year; but the Orange has a distinct season, February and March, of blooming, the same as the Apple, and if the crop has not been gathered at that season the trees will show both flowers and ripe fruit. If by some means the first bloom is wholly or partially destroyed, the tree will generally bloom again in June, and if it so chanced that the same tree bloomed the preceding June, it will present flowers and ripe and green fruit, but not otherwise. Another is that the Orange will not bear until budded or grafted. Probably at least two-thirds of the bearing groves in the State are seedlings. Budding insures *earlier* bearing and perpetuates distinct varieties.

## CHAPTER IX.

### St. Augustine and the Gardens of the Ponce de Leon.



ALTHOUGH the developments of the State of Florida date almost entirely from since the close of the Civil War, still it contains the oldest city—St. Augustine—by forty years in the United States. This city was founded by Pedro Menendez de Aviles, who took possession of the place in the name of Philip II, King of Spain, on September 8th, 1565. As he had arrived on the coast the 28th day of the preceding month, the day dedicated to Saint Augustine, he called the place *Ciudad de San Augustine* in honor of that celebrated Latin Father.

Years ago, Harriet Beecher Stowe, in describing St. Augustine, wrote of it: "If an old, sleepy, narrow-streeted mediæval town, with balconied houses, inner courts, and tessellated floors, had stranded on a beach of the New World, that town would have been St. Augustine." The description is still a faithful one of the ancient portions of the town; but much of its quiet and sleepiness has vanished, for within a few years it has developed into a fashionable and famous winter resort. Numerous palatial hotels have sprung up as if by magic, together with scores of modern private winter residences, and the city now boasts a population of nearly ten thousand, with from forty to fifty thousand winter visitors.

While at once the oldest and the newest, the two ages of its life blend in seemingly perfect harmony, and one may affiliate himself or herself with either or both as inclination may dictate. For the essentially fashionable and pleasure-seeking there is the anomaly of a "season" at its height under skies as fair and amid breezes as balmy as those of June, while the North is clothed with a mantle of ermine; and for the lover of the antique, the curious and the interesting, there is an exceptionally rich field for research and sight-seeing. The narrow streets, quaint houses, overhanging bal-

conies, ancient ruins and other cobwebs of antiquity, all remain undisturbed and fascinating as ever.

The streets in the old portions of the town are very narrow, one of them—Treasury Street—being but seven feet wide. The first story walls of many of the houses are built of *coquina* (a strange shell conglomeration) and the second of wood. The streets have no sidewalks, and in many instances one steps from the front door directly *into* the street. Second-story balconies, overhanging the narrow streets, are numerous, and where two are exactly opposite the occupants can almost shake hands across the street. Connected with many of these houses are gardens of which Sidney Lanier gives this tantalizing glimpse: "There are quaint courts enclosed with jealous high *coquina*-walls, and giving into rich, cool gardens where Lemons, Oranges, Bananas, Japan Plums, Figs, Date Palms and all manner of tropical flowers and greeneries hide from the northeast winds, and sanctify the old Spanish-built homes."

But it is the gardens of the famous Ponce de Leon Hotel which I particularly wish to describe. Probably every one of my readers has heard of this wonderful structure, the cost of which ran into the millions. It is unexcelled by any hotel in this country or Europe, and was pronounced by the Duke of Newcastle the most magnificent building in the world. To adequately describe it would be impossible, even if I had the space to command. Happily the style of architecture chosen was that of the Spanish Renaissance, so that it harmonizes perfectly with the historical associations of the old town, and its name was equally happily chosen, commemorating as it does the memory of the romantic old Spanish knight who discovered Florida. The material from which the vast edifice is constructed is *coquina* mixed with Portland cement—not put up in blocks but cast in cement, so that the whole structure is without seam. The composite is of a light mother-of-pearl color, contrasting with the rich terra-cotta balconies and trimmings of the walls, turrets and towers of the red-tiled roofs.

The hotel is built around three sides of a courtyard one hundred and fifty feet square, the fourth side enclosed by a one-story portico through the centre of which a massive gateway gives entrance to the courtyard. Inside, the latter is a scene of magic beauty. In the centre is an elaborate fountain, and flagged walks

winding through a maze of Palms and other tropical plants and fruits, lead to the hotel entrance, which is a broad Spanish arch worthy of a king's palace.

Completely sheltered from the winds by the surrounding walls, everything in the courtyard thrives with tropical luxuriance. Several species of the Date Palm genus (*Phoenix*) are represented in noble specimens with spiny fronds several feet in length. To one side of the main walk grows a noble example of the Florida Rubber-tree (*Ficus aurea*,) twenty or more feet high, with a massive head of the richest green foliage. As a companion on the opposite side is an equally fine *Araucaria* of striking appearance. A specimen of the Palm *Cocos plumosa*, fifteen or twenty feet high, spreads out its feathered leaves like giant plumes, and lower-growing fan-leaved Palms are grouped effectively about. Gigantic specimens of the Century Plant (*Agave*) occupy positions calculated to best display their perfect symmetry of growth, and great clumps of Pampas Grass stand like fountains of green ribbon-like leaves, shooting up feathery plumes as beautiful as silvery spray. The Australian Silk Oak (*Grevillea robusta*) arrests attention by the exquisite silvery sheen of the under side of its leaves, which are as finely cut and as beautiful as some of the most delicate Ferns. There are Catley Guavas with dainty waxen fruits shining amid evergreen, Camellia-like foliage, and immense specimens of the strikingly curious and strictly tropical Melon Pawpaw (*Carica papaya*,) while Poinsettias with gleaming scarlet bracts, *Russelia juncea* fringed with its coral-drops, the Golden Dewdrop (*Duranta Plumieri*) displaying at one and the same time its racemes of lovely Forget-me-not like blossoms and clusters of beautiful golden berries, Poinciana and Bottle Brush, with their curious and beautiful flowers, help make up this garden which is more Spanish than American.

Beneath the shade of some of the taller-growing shrubs are plants of the evergreen *Pittosporum tobira* trained and clipped into the forms of chairs and settees absolutely perfect in outline and naturalness of position. There are also specimens of the handsome variegated form of this shrub; and scattered among and beneath all these trees and shrubs are plants of more humble growth—clumps of Coontie (*Zamia integrifolia*) in fruit, Spider Lilies,

*Sansevieria zealanica*. Freesias, Petunias, Phlox, Sweet Alyssum, and many more, familiar or otherwise.

Along the low parapet and up the columns of the verandas and portico facing the courtyard, are trained the Malayan Jessamine (*Rhyncospermum Jasminoides*), Climbing Fern (*Lygodium scandens*) and Lantanas (trained to climb,) while high up on the pearl-grey walls the South American *Bignonia venusta* hangs out a crimson banner, and at night the snowy chalices of the Moonflower bid the retiring guest "*Bona-nox*."

A lovely scene by day, at night it is one of enchantment. Then every leaf glistens and every shadow is accentuated beneath the glare of the electric lights, while from the mouths of the heroic-sized metal frogs and turtles grouped around the fountain basin, jets of sparkling water fall into the pool below, with a mellow cadence full of unwritten music, and flowers expand

"That keep  
Their odors to themselves all day,  
But when the sunlight dies away,  
Let the delicious fragrance out  
To every breeze that roams about."

The grounds surrounding the hotel are arranged and planted in an equally attractive manner. The walks and many of the beds are bordered by low and closely-clipped hedges of the Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*.) The lordly Cabbage Palm has been freely planted, together with large quantities of the striking appearing Spanish Dagger, the two lending a decidedly tropical aspect to the scene. There are red-barked Eucalyptus trees, Oleanders in single clumps and dense masses, venerable Red Cedars of uncertain age, and over all the sweet breath of the Opoponax (*Acacia Farnesiana*.) On the closely cropped lawns fountains send up ceaselessly columns of liquid silver or misty spray, while over all bends a sky as blue as Italy's own, and perpetual summer smiles on this garden of never-fading verdure.



## CHAPTER X.

### The Garden and Flowers of the Tampa Bay Hotel.

“ And the Jessamine faint, and pure Tuberose,  
The sweetest flower for scent that blows ;  
And all rare blossoms from every clime  
Make this garden the essence of love sublime !”



THE Tampa Bay Hotel, at Tampa on the west coast of Florida, is in every way as magnificent and interesting as the Ponce de Leon at St. Augustine, and yet as totally unlike it as the imagination can picture—so much so that a visit to either does not render it one whit less desirable to see the other. But to the true flower lover—one interested in trees, shrubbery, vines and plant growth of all kinds—a visit to the Tampa Bay Hotel would be the most interesting, for the grounds are much more extensive than those of the Ponce de Leon, and are beautifully laid out and stocked with rare and beautiful plants from almost every known portion of the globe. A catalogue and manual of the tropical and semi-tropical fruit and flower plants growing in the hotel grounds, shows that of strictly tropical fruits, thirty-four distinct genera are represented, of semi-tropical fruits nineteen, and of ornamentals—trees, shrubs, vines, etc.—one hundred and sixty genera. As many of these genera are represented by a number of species, it makes a list of considerable length.

The hotel stands on a rise of ground which slopes gently down to the river's edge, but it is quite impossible to convey in words any adequate idea of how the structure looks. Standing on the bridge over the river which flows between the town and the hotel grounds, one beholds, rising from a mass of brilliant flowering shrubbery, Palms and other trees, a long massive pile, fashioned from brick and iron, which grows to immensity as the eye travels over its out-



lines. From its flat roofs rise numerous immense silvered domes and Moorish minarets topped with the golden star and crescent of the Orient, all glistening intensely in the brightness of a semi-tropic sun. Galleries, broad and long enough to furnish a lounging-place for quite a multitude, extend along the east and west fronts, the roofs starting over the third story windows, sloping gently to the outer edges, from which drop huge ornaments in the form of arched and hanging pendants ending in brackets at every column and the walls.

Extending on all sides are the ample grounds where are fountains, green lawns, flower beds, arbors, and gardens in which flourish the flowers and fruits of the tropics in unwonted luxuriance and prodigal profusion, the royal Rose and the poetic Jessamine breathing forth their rich odors in harmonious companionship with the brilliant but more plebian Geranium. Along the galleries rare and beautiful vines have woven curtains and draperies with traceries inimitable, and the green lawn is whitened by the falling petals of the Camellia, the only snow that is ever seen in this fair clime. In the centre of the lawn, facing the river, is a miniature fort with mounted cannon, Prickly Pear Cactus plants straggling over the stone-work, and a flagstaff that floats the United States flag by day succeeded by a crescent of electric fire at night, and along the river front a winding path, shaded by Palm trees, leads to a dainty little boathouse where are all sorts of pleasure craft.

Palms enter largely into the ornamentation of the grounds, particularly the native Cabbage Palm or Palmetto, which has been set out in large numbers and forms a very striking feature in the surroundings. There are walks wholly bordered on both sides with perfect specimens fifteen to twenty feet tall, the trunks rising up like the pillars of some vast corridor, and groups at one of the entrance gates containing specimens fifty to sixty feet tall and which it required the combined efforts of twelve men to transplant from their native woods. There are Coconut Palms, small yet, but exceedingly beautiful, and various species of the Date Palm genus (*Phoenix*.) One of the most striking objects is a large circular bed with a Date Palm in the centre and the balance filled with *Poinsettia pulcherrima*. The bluish-green pinnate leaves of the Palm, rising up from and arching over the large terminal bracts of fiery

scarlet leaves of the Poinsettia forms a marvelous picture during the winter months. The Spanish Dagger or Bayonet (*Yucca aloifolia*) is another native plant which has been liberally utilized, especially along the river front, and with a striking effect.

In front of one of the galleries an enormous Live Oak spreads afar its giant arms, and in addition to the lovely silvery-grey Spanish Moss which hangs in banners and streamers from its venerable head, various Air Plants (*Tillandsias*) and Orchids have been attached to the limbs and become established. Not far from this Oak is a spring from which a little rill courses through the grounds to the river. The rill banks are clothed with a natural growth of Ferns, Wax Myrtles, Saw Palms, etc., and in addition to these have been added Spanish Dagger, Bananas, Cannas, Caladiums, Butterfly Lily (*Hedychium coronarium*) and other moisture-loving plants, forming a real tropical jungle along and through which a path winds and crosses. The native Swamp Fern (*Acrostichum aureum*) is a striking feature in this jungle, and would astonish northern eyes. It is very stately and showy, with large thick fronds six or seven feet in height. Close by is a clump of *Bambusa vulgaris*, the large unarmed Bamboo of Bengal, towering, like some monster Fern, fifty feet in the air. Every cane with its foliage is like an immense ostrich plume, bending and swaying gracefully in the passing breeze or raging storm.

On the lawn are large Orange trees clothed in emerald green and ornamented with golden globes of lusciousness, bowers enclosing seats and covered with running Roses, Chinese Hibiscus and Poincianas a blaze of flowers, and numerous other shrubs and trees, including Poinsettias, Camellias, the magnificent Royal Poinciana, Roses, Jessamines, Agaves, Rubber-Tree, Acalyphas, Oleanders, Pampas Grass and many more; and in the *parterre* in winter, may be seen blooming Pinks, in variety, Ageratum, Zinnias, Sweet Alysium, Vincas, Phlox Drummondi, Petunias, Pansies, Geraniums, Balsams, Nasturtiums and other favorite garden flowers. Along the main walk the name of the hotel is cut out of the sod of the lawn in large letters, and filled in with flowering plants; and on each side of the steps leading to the main entrance, is growing a fine specimen of the beautiful Australian Silk Oak.

But the floral display of this famous hostelry is not confined

to the outside. Ascend the broad steps, pass through the massive entrance doors which are of Spanish Mahogany, highly polished and encasing heavy plates of beveled glass, into the rotunda, and a scene of beauty and richness is revealed. It is a grand assembly hall seventy-eight feet square and thirty feet from the floor to the ceiling. Thirteen marble columns support a balcony that looks over from the second floor, and grouped about these, in costly jardinières, are rare and beautiful foliage plants. There are majestic Palms, their feathery fronds arching overhead, gorgeous-leaved Crotons whose tints would put to shame the autumn colorings of northern forests, filmy Ferns and stately Dragon-trees, among the latter a specimen of *Dracæna fragrans* eight or nine feet tall, and having perfect leaves from the soil up.

A grand hallway extends from north to south no less than seven hundred feet, passing through the rotunda. Wandering down this hallway one finally comes to the gracefully rounding curve of the solarium leading to the grand dining hall. Here—in the solarium—another delightful scene is revealed. A flood of soft light falls through scores of windows on either hand, and in front of every window is either an antique and curious little table or an equally curious old chair, holding a jardinière containing a beautiful flowering or foliage plant. Among them are exquisite Ferns, vari-colored Crotons, Eucharis with snowy chalices, Araucarias, Coleus, Salvias and Sansevieras. At intervals are bays and groups of slender columns supporting the roof, and about these are massed Palms and gorgeous foliage plants, forming fairy-like bowers and charming nooks in which to linger, to rest or read or enjoy an uninterrupted *tete-a-tete*.

In the furnishings of the hotel, antique, curious and historical furniture, rare old cabinets, costly *bric-a-brac* and beautiful etchings and paintings enter largely—the *tout ensemble* forming a truly Alhambric picture in the most romantic section of prosaic America.

## CHAPTER XI.

### Where May and December are Wed.

"There are flowers, flowers, flowers,  
Blooming in our woods to-day,  
In our Florida December  
As they bloom in Northern May;  
Red for love of a true brother,  
White for lives unstained and true,  
Blue, true hearts to one another—  
Nation's hues, Red, White and Blue." —*Anna Perkins.*



**D**URING the winter months there are less wild flowers to be seen in Florida than in other seasons of the year, but the true flower lover returning from a stroll through the dry Pines woods, a trip around the lake shores and creek banks or a walk in the densely shaded "hammocks," may bring back a respectable sized bouquet made up of a considerable number of distinct varieties and species of these wildlings.

Carping critics often cast a slur upon the flowery title of the State and spurn its claim of being "the Land of Flowers." It is true that the State presents no such wide reaches, vast masses and great profusion of brilliant colored flowers as are seen on the Texas prairies and in some portions of California, where often acres upon acres are thickly covered with one species of flower until the eye becomes almost wearied with their brilliancy, and prodigality begets indifference. One of the chief charms of the woodland beauties of our Northern States, is their comparative rarity, and it is much the same in this State with the majority of our wildlings. A hurried tour through Florida by boat and rail, especially in winter, will give but a very limited idea of the rich flora and semi-tropical vegetation to be found in the various portions of so extended a country as this.

There are doubtless less wild flowers here in December than any other month, yet the words of the verse at the head of this chapter are literally true, as I shall endeavor to show; and I think a bouquet may be easily arranged which, in beauty and variety, will rival the best productions of a Northern May.

Of Violets there are four distinct species, blooming not only in December, but through all the winter months. *Viola palmata* is a beautiful large blue or purple Violet often found growing in high, dry Pine woods, but more often on ground ranging between the high and low. The common blue Violet (*V. cucullata*,) so universal in the North, is common in "hammock" lands, while *V. lanceolata* and *V. primulaefolia*, two white species, are often found growing together and very abundant near streams, lakes or ponds. A peculiarity of the Violets is that they blossom during the warm season without showing any colored petals, but have a green calyx, with stamen and pistils, and perfect their seeds.

Another flower which is produced throughout the winter months is *Oldenlandia rotundifolia*, a Southern cousin of the dainty Northern Bluet or Innocence. It has trailing stems, with small roundish leaves, spreading over the ground like a mat and producing a great many delicate, pure white flowers, with four petals forming a cross about half an inch in diameter. It, too, lays aside its white petals during the warm season, producing only inconspicuous green flowers, with the seed capsules mostly under the leaves. The dwarf Butterwort (*Pinguicula pumila*) appears early in December and is abundant all winter. Its flowers vary from purple to nearly white, from one-half to three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and borne on a scape three to six inches high, ascending from a cluster of leaves. The lower lobe of the corolla has a Violet-like spur near its base. It is abundant in the grass of low Pine woods, especially near streams or ponds. *P. elatior* is a large purple species, flowers an inch wide, borne on scapes eight to twelve inches high. Still more beautiful is *P. lutea*. This is sometimes called Alligator Lettuce, and the curious tuft of yellow-green leaves resembles some sorts of Lettuce. From the centre shoot up slender scapes six to twelve inches high, each bearing a flower one to one and one-half inches wide, gleaming like burnished gold.

That strange, almost uncanny plant commonly known as Indian-pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*,) which at the North blooms in August or September, flowers here in November and December. It is quite common in the "hammocks," growing (parasitically) on roots or decaying vegetable matter. It grows generally in clusters, several stems near together and six to ten inches high. The whole

plant, stems, leaves and flowers, is pure white or pinkish, semi-transparent and fragile appearing, like some species of the Mushroom family. The straight stem bears scale-like leaves and is surmounted by a drooping pipe-like head which is a regular flower with calyx, corolla, stamens, pistils and numerous seeds. As the plant becomes older the head rises erect and the whole plant turns black. Near streams and ponds yellow *Coreopsis* and the blue *Lobelia glandulosa* are occasionally found during most of the winter, and *Chrysopsis* and *Hieraciums* often linger on the uplands till after the new year commences.

At this season it is sometimes hard distinguishing which belongs to the old year and which to the new. Our lovely Yellow Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), which is in the full splendor of its "golden glory" in the month of February, I have found expanding some of its flowers as early as the eighth of December; but the winter was an unusually warm one. If there has been no untimely frost, a moonlight night or the early morning hours will reveal the curtains of vines, which are looped from tree to tree and bush to bush along the river and lake banks, bespangled with the snowy chalices of the Moonflower (*Ipomœa Bona-nox*.) Just now, too, the Mistletoe is in full perfection, its milky-white, pearl-like berries gleaming amidst its peculiar yellowish-green foliage; and the coral beads of the Holly burn like fire in their setting of deepest, darkest green, spiny leaves. Last December a botanist correspondent, residing in another portion of the State, observed, besides those I have named, twenty-six other distinct species of wild flowers in bloom. This is certainly a very respectable showing for the month when there is the greatest dearth of flowers everywhere.

Poets are inspired by their surroundings, and the songs they sing are attuned in harmony with what they themselves have seen and know of nature. Therefore northern poets sing of springtime as the season of flowers, of hope and promise, and of the autumn as the season of the sere and yellow leaf. A gifted writer in this State has said that had Bryant been born and lived in Florida instead of Massachusetts, he would never have said of autumn:

"The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,  
Of wailing winds and naked woods and meadows brown and sere."



And that had Thomas Hood been born and lived in Florida instead of the British Isles, he would never have moaned of November like this:

“ No sun, no moon, no morn, no noon,  
No dawn, no dusk, no proper time of day.”

“When we raise a crop of Florida poets,” says the same writer, “their songs of autumn will be songs of joy.”

That future “ crop of poets” will not have to depend upon the wild woods alone for inspiration at this season of the year, for many of the most desirable garden flowers, ornamental trees, shrubs and vines now make a grand show of blossoms and foliage. *Tecoma stans* is in the very zenith of its glory during the first half of December, there are Roses in profusion and perfection, Lantanas and Chinese Hibiscus striving to outdo each other, Oleanders that rival the Roses in form and color, and Jessamines and Honey-suckles shedding their sweetness abroad in the garden.

I feel that I cannot draw this chapter to a close in a more fitting manner than by quoting the following lines written by a Northern lady while spending her first winter in Florida, and by heartily seconding the invitation voiced in the closing stanza:

“ Fair Florida ! in Flora’s bowers  
Vine covered, bell-like blossoms swing;  
Sweet is the air with myriad flowers,  
Sweet is the song the mock-birds sing.

“ Your graceful Palms wave in the air,  
Flame-tipt your Lilies rare unfold,  
Your luscious fruits hang tempting, fair,  
Sun-lit your globes of orange gold.

“ Bananas stately bow their heads  
To offer fruits without compare;  
Pineapples from their spiny beds  
Lift nectar that the gods might share.

“ Come from your northern cities grand,  
Leave care behind to rest awhile,  
To dream of heaven in this fair land  
And bask in nature’s loving smile.”



## CHAPTER XII.

### Living and Locating in Florida.

Who that hath reason and his smell,  
Would not midst Rose and Jasmine dwell;  
Encompass'd round with such delight,  
To ear, nose, touch, the taste and sight."

—Cowley.



**T**HAT an eager and growing interest in the South has sprung up among all classes—homeseekers, capitalists, manufacturers, merchants and laborers—throughout the North is apparent to all who have watched the press, particularly during the past year. And no State in the whole South is receiving so large a share of the interest and investigations of earnest homeseekers as is Florida. Indeed, remarkable interest in this State began more than a decade ago, before attention was turned to hardly any other section of the South, and how rapid and remarkable Florida's development has been the last census returns show.

A comparison of this State with Illinois shows the following startling results: Between 1880 and 1890 Florida gained in population 49 per cent., while Illinois gained but 24 per cent. In wealth, Florida gained 150 per cent., and Illinois lost 8 per cent. The per capita wealth of Florida increased 71 per cent. In Illinois it decreased 26 per cent. In 1880 the average man in Illinois was worth over twice as much as the average man in Florida; but in 1890 the average Floridian was richer than the average Illinoisian. As far as per centage is concerned the population of Florida is increasing nearly twice as fast as any State east of the Mississippi.

At the close of the Civil War at least nine-tenths of the area of Florida which is adapted to the production of Oranges and kindred fruits, was an unsettled, undeveloped and almost totally unknown

wilderness, to be reached only by private conveyance. In 1885 the Orange crop of the State amounted to but 600,000 boxes, while the crop of 1894 was at least 5,000,000 boxes. Last year the Florida Pineapple crop amounted to from 50,000 to 60,000 crates, the year before that only 35,000 crates, and in 1892 only 20,000 crates. In one year alone the value of the Pineapple crop increased from \$147,000 to \$600,000. And Spruce-Pine land, on the Indian River, nearly valueless for other purposes than Pineapple growing, which in 1880 could be bought for \$1.25 per acre, now commands from \$125 to \$300, or more, per acre. The development in truck-gardening has been equally great, the growing of Tomatoes alone for Northern markets having assumed tremendous proportions. The production of Tobacco is a lusty "infant industry" which shows every indication of developing gigantic proportions; the discovery of phosphate opened up a mine of untold wealth to the State, while the fish, oyster, turtle and sponge industries of the Florida east and west coast annually amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars, and are yet in their infancy.

As a great natural sanitarium alone, Florida's importance cannot be overestimated, for it is truly

"The land of the south wind, whose sweet-scented breath  
Bears freely to thousands long respites from death."

Consumption—a disease more deadly than cholera, typhus, smallpox and yellow fever combined—kills 100,000 persons every year in the United States, and it is safe to say that of these at least two-thirds would live out natural lives if they came to this State *early enough* and remained *the year around*. But too often the coming is put off until too late, being finally embraced as a last resort, and in a good many instances life has been lengthened several years when to have remained at the North would have meant certain death within six months. But this matchless climate cannot make new lungs where none exist, nor build up depleted systems in which all recuperative powers are forever deadened.

But, despite the fact that so many incurables come here to die, statistics prove that the death rate in Florida is lower, according to population, than in any other State in the Union. It is amusing to have residents of New England anxiously inquire

if Florida isn't dreadfully sickly and the climate fatal, when we find, by turning to the census of 1890, that the death rate for Florida during that year was only 10.60 per thousand, while that of Massachusetts was 20.15, about twice as high. Of the maladies indigenous to the State, nearly all are of malarial origin, and of those the types are exceedingly mild and easily subdued, the pernicious and malignant cases being exceptional and usually easy to trace to a sufficient and preventable cause. Wherever cistern, instead of well, water is used, all malarial tendencies disappear if the location is otherwise healthy. So far as fevers are concerned, during the census year of 1890, only 460 people died from fever of all kinds in the State. To offset this, the climate is finely adapted to the curing of a number of diseases, particularly those of the nasal cavities, the throat, lungs and heart, also kidney and rheumatic afflictions.

As for children, from babies up, it is a perfect paradise. There is scarcely a day in the whole year when they may not be in the open air, and very rarely are troubled with colds or coughs. Measles, chicken pox and whooping cough are modified to a degree that renders them quite harmless when they do appear, which is very seldom, while those dread diseases of childhood, diphtheria, scarlet fever and croup, are happily unknown. At least one physician has made the prediction that Florida will become a place of refuge to which parents will bring their children *in the summer* to escape the dangers of cholera infantum, and his opinion is backed up by statistics that none can question. The census of 1890 shows that in proportion to population the mortality among children is 26 per cent. higher in Ohio, 40 per cent. higher in Pennsylvania, 60 per cent. higher in Illinois, and more than twice as high in New York as in Florida. The climate is equally conducive to longevity among the old, owing to its mildness and equability, which admits of living so much in the open air, and the serenity of a life free from deleterious excitements.

Life in Florida is unconventional to a degree, and its placidity and freedom thoroughly takes possession of nearly everyone who lives in the State any length of time. The piazza is the sitting-room—and with many families the dining-room also—fully three-fourths of the year. Windows and doors are almost constantly

open, admitting the health-giving air, as it is swept through the balsamic Pine forests. Few who leave the State are able to remain away permanently, but eventually wander back. There is a charm or a magic in the atmosphere which is well-nigh irresistible, and once felt is never forgotten.

But I would not be understood as conveying the idea that Florida does not possess drawbacks and disadvantages, for it does. There is no Eden in this world, and the inhabitants of Florida have obstacles to meet and surmount. But to those who wish to make permanent, prosperous homes, I sincerely believe Florida offers greater inducements and *less* serious obstacles than any State in the Union. Nowhere else can living expenses be reduced to so low a minimum, the soil responds generously to the earnest attention of the husbandman, and the most humble, if industrious, may exclaim with the poet:

“ That hut is mine; that cottage half embower’d  
With modest Jessamine.”

Locating in Florida is a matter of serious importance, and on which success or failure may entirely depend. A volume could be written on the subject and yet it may all be expressed in a few words. Select a healthy locality, fertile soil, as good frost protection as possible, and close proximity to transportation. On the first three points, a person not familiar with the peculiar indications of the State, may be “roped in” by unprincipled parties. Speaking from the experience of several years’ residence in the State and extensive travel over it, I would not locate near large rivers, on account of the swamps bordering most of them; I would not locate on either coast, for the soil is mostly very poor, at certain seasons the sea winds are high, constant and very disagreeable, and at times the mosquitoes and sand flies are voracious and “numberless as the sands of the seashore”; I would not locate anywhere in the perfectly level sections of the State, because I should expect the monotonous outlook to kill me; but I would locate on high, rolling land some miles from the coast, not over two miles from a railroad having good connections North and South and to the coast. In short, if I had it to do over again, I would locate just where I am.

## JESSAMINE, PASCO COUNTY, FLORIDA.

ITS LOCATION, AND SOME OF THE ATTRACTIONS AND ADVANTAGES  
OF THE REGION FOR INTENDING SETTLERS.



PASCO is one of the Gulf Counties of South Florida, *i. e.*, its western boundary is the Gulf of Mexico. Hernando county bounds it on the north and Hillsborough county on the South. Jessamine is situated in the midst of what is known as the Fort Dade country, a section embracing an area of some ten or twelve miles square in the eastern portion of the county. The topography of this region is greatly diversified, being entirely different from that of almost all other parts of South Florida. It is a country abounding in high hills, rolling lands, bubbling springs, crystal lakes and running brooks. The eye is not wearied by monotonous stretches of low lands covered with nothing but interminable pine forests, and to the flat portions of the State, where deep and glaring sand seriously interferes with pedestrian exercise, and makes driving a task instead of a pleasure, the noble hills crowned with giant trees clad in richest verdure, and the firm, hard roads of this region form a welcome and pleasant contrast. People from hilly or mountainous regions of the North are often rendered homesick and disheartened by the "flat as a pancake" localities of the State, but invariably go into raptures over the pine and oak clad hills and fertile valleys of this section. Visitors from the central and eastern parts of the State cannot get over their astonishment that such a unique and beautiful region exists in the State, while other residents who have not seen for themselves refuse to believe that we have hills 200 and 300 feet in elevation, and crystal springs breaking out of steep hillsides, and escaping in singing brooks which go flashing and sparkling over miniature cascades and through edying pools, along ravines and glens of the most romantic beauty, rich with growths of semi-tropical verdure.

One of the most important advantages of this region is the character of the most of the soil, which is not only among the most fertile in the State, but of a distinct character for South Florida, *being equally adapted for both fruit raising and general farming.* In some sections of the State little besides Oranges can be raised, and in others nothing but Pineapples; but in this section one can easily make a good living by general farming, while he is bringing his grove into bearing, an advantage of incalculable value which should not be overlooked. Rye, Oats, Corn, Rice, Sea Island Cotton, Peanuts, Tobacco, Irish and Sweet Potatoes, Sugar Cane, Arrow-Root, Chufas, Cassava, Indigo, Castor Beans, Cow Peas, Millet, Teosinte and other forage, and nearly the entire list of vegetables and various other products, may be successfully grown here, and by the use of less fertilizer than would be required in ninety-nine one-hundredths of the remainder of South Florida.

No other section of the State offers greater, and *few equal*, advantages for the culture of Oranges and other Citrus fruits (Lemons, Limes, Citrons, Shaddocks and Grape Fruit or Pomelo.) And nowhere in the State can groves be brought into bearing at less expense for fertilizing. Some of the few early settlers of this section selected choice bodies of land on which they reared the finest Orange groves to full bearing without the application of a particle of fertilizer, a fact totally discredited by the majority of the inhabitants of Florida. Some of these trees are forty and fifty years old, and yearly increase in bearing surface and productiveness. Other fruits which may be successfully raised here are Bananas, Pineapples, (under a simple brush shelter,) Guavas, (both the common and Cattley varieties,) Figs, Mulberries, Plums, (native and Japanese,) Peaches, LeConte and Keiffer Pears, Pomegranates, Grapes, Loquat or Japan Medlar, (*Eriobotrya Japonica*,) Cayenne or Surinam Cherry, (*Eugenia Mitchellii*,) Downy Myrtle, (*Myrtus tomentosa*,) Japan and native Persimmons, Dates, Avocado or Alligator Pear, (*Persea gratissima*,) Pecans, Japan Giant Chestnuts, Olives and Strawberries. Many of the strictly tropical fruits may also be successfully raised if one will go to the slight trouble of protecting them against occasional frosts which are mostly of a light nature.

One of the most important considerations when locating in Florida, is immunity from frequent and disastrous frosts. The so-



called "frost-line" is a myth, which exists only in the vocabulary of the wily land agent. There is no habitable portion of the mainland of Florida which is not visited by frost at intervals of greater or less duration; but there are favored localities, where, for some natural reason—water protection or elevation—immunity from damaging frost exists to a marked degree. And this is such a locality, owing to its remarkable elevation. It lies just below latitude  $28\frac{1}{2}$  degrees, being farther south than Sanford and Orlando (Orange county,) and is the *highest* land on this parallel and gets the full benefit of the Gulf and Ocean breezes crossing from west to east and east to west. It is in reality an area of high table land and hills, from which the water flows in nearly all directions. Owing to this high elevation and the warm character of the soil, frost of a serious nature rarely falls here. Often a sharp frost visits the lower lying lands in the same parallel in the central and eastern parts of the State, when none whatever is seen here; and also on numerous occasions frost has done serious damage fifty, one hundred, and even one hundred and fifty miles farther south, but little or none here—all owing to elevation. When a serious *freeze* (the tail-end of a Dakota blizzard,) like that of '86, or December 29, 1894, comes, these favored localities suffer too, though in a less degree.

Another, and even more important consideration, is that of healthfulness. There is not a healthier location in the State than this one. The reasons for this are simple. The elevation is so great that it may reasonably be said to be above the malarial line. Then there are no swamps, Cypress ponds, or sluggish rivers with swampy banks to breed miasma. Instead, the face of the country is made up of high hills and beautifully rolling lands of a sandy, porous nature, with clear, crystal lakes smiling in the valleys. The excellent character of the well water is undoubtedly a potent factor in the healthfulness of this section. The water is clear, pure and delightful, compared with that of most sections of the State. But it is doubtless better to use cistern water *everywhere* in the South. It is now generally admitted that malarial trouble arises more from water drunk than from the miasmatic exhalations inhaled. Exceptionally sickly localities in the South have speedily become exceptionally healthy when spring and well water has been discarded for cistern or artesian. A physician who has resided



here for over forty years—engaged in Orange culture—has published a certificate that this region may be said to be almost perfectly free from malaria. Throat and lung complaints and all specific contagious diseases are unknown, as also are chills and fever. In this climate the liver is apt to become sluggish at times, resulting in biliousness, which, however, is easily prevented or controlled. This is actually almost the only form of sickness to contend with here. The children here furnish all the proof necessary to establish the healthfulness of this locality. They are bright, active, strong and healthy, go bare-footed—and many of them bare-headed—almost every day in the year, coming as near to raising themselves as is possible anywhere.

Still another consideration, and one not sufficiently pondered or understood by the majority of Northerners, and which we have not the space to fully explain, is the very small number of negroes to be found not only in this immediate locality, but in the entire county and surrounding country. What few there are here are mostly of superior character and well behaved, the majority of them owning farms and some of them Orange groves. The race problem is a serious one—*how* serious is known only to those who live in sections of the South where the colored people swarm.

In addition to this being a peculiarly favored section for the prosecution of both agriculture and horticulture, stock does exceptionally well for Florida. Actual experiments have proved that fine pastures may be made here, and, in consequence, plenty of rich milk and butter produced. As for poultry, there is no spot on the face of the earth where hens, chickens, turkeys and ducks may be more easily and successfully reared. A certain little woman at our elbow points with pardonable pride to her record of one year, which is 100 chickens raised out of 102 hatched.

To sum up, this section possesses the combined advantages of beautiful and diversified scenery, rich and fertile soil adapted to both agriculture and horticulture, elevation, which is the surest protection for crops against cold, healthfulness, good water and freedom from an objectionable class of people. More than ten years ago the State Bureau of Immigration said of this section that no other in the State "offers greater attraction or variety for a residence or advantages for the successful prosecution of agriculture

and horticulture," and that "transportation, enterprise, industry and immigration will soon make it one of the wealthiest, most prosperous and desirable portions of the State." When that was written there was no means of reaching this section except by private conveyance. Now it may be entered over the lines of three railroads. Many settlers have come in and located after viewing its superior advantages; but it has never been advertised, capital has not yet found it out, and consequently the most peerless section of the State for permanent homes remains comparatively unknown. Had it received one-quarter of the advertising which the Indian River and some other sections of the State have, it would to-day be entirely settled up with a happy, prosperous people. We have been in nearly every part of the State, but have yet to see a section which, in our honest estimation, combines so many attractions and advantages as this.

### **Jessamine and its Location.**

As has already been stated, Jessamine is in the midst of this pre-eminently desirable section of Florida. Its location is an exceptionally beautiful and advantageous one for a colony or settlement. Mirror Lake, an almost circular sheet of water of mirror-like beauty, and about one hundred acres in extent, forms its "centre." From the shores the land rises beautifully, up through rich hammock to pine land until, at a distance of from 60 to 80 rods from the lake shores, it ends in an undulating plateau elevated from 70 to 125 feet higher than the waters of the lake. A street run around the lake on the brow of this encircling plateau would be about three miles in extent, and from almost every rod of its length the surface of the lake could be seen flashing far below. If houses were built on every acre bordering this street, almost every house could be seen from all the others. This conveys an idea of how slightly the situation is, and how elevated the land is above the surface of the lake. It is in reality a vast natural amphitheatre, the lake forming the "pit," the sides of which only need the hand of man to be transformed into smiling fruit orchards and luxuriant truck patches. And there are thousands of surrounding acres adapted for the same purposes.

All about here are locations where the most beautiful homes imaginable may be made. Close by is another and larger lake which may be sufficiently lowered, at a trifling expense, to reclaim many acres of deep, pure muck of inexhaustible fertility—muck which produces such Sugar Cane as the Louisiana planters never dreamed of. Land is still cheap and may be purchased at ridiculously low figures in comparison with prices for poorer lands in other portions of the State. There is no better location than this for some capitalist or company of capitalists to invest in and open up to settlers.

Jessamine—which should not be confounded with a little station of the same name on the South Florida Railroad, in Orange County—is a money order post office and express office, and has mail service twice a day. It is located one and one-half miles from Chipco station on the Sanford & St. Petersburg Railroad. It is only one mile to the nearest point on the railroad, where a depot will be built and named Jessamine. A wire will also eventually be run to Jessamine proper, giving telegraphic communication. Two saw mills—one a mile and the other a mile and a half distant—furnish both rough and dressed lumber at lowest prices. School three-quarters of a mile distant.

Dade City, the county seat, is six and one-half miles distant, located on two railroads—the Florida Central and Peninsular, the great trunk line of the State, and the South Florida Branch of the Savannah, Florida and Western Railroad. Dade City boasts several stores, a flourishing bank, court house, jail, a fine graded school and churches.

The Sanford and St. Petersburg Railroad (formerly known as the Orange Belt,) gives the Jessamine region an outlet north and south. It is about 150 miles in length, Sanford on the St. John's River being its northern terminus, and St. Petersburg, on the Gulf coast, its southern, while Jessamine is almost exactly half way between these termini. No other road in the State makes so many connections with other roads and steamer lines, giving exceptional facilities for reaching any section of the State. At Sanford connections are made with the Clyde's St. John's River steamers, the J. T. & K. W. R'y, and the South Florida R'y; at Paola with the Tavares branch of the J. T. & K. W. R'y; at two points with the

Florida Midland R'y; at Toronto with a branch of the F. C. & P. R'y; at two points with the Tavares & Gulf R'y; at Lacoochee, nine miles from Jessamine, with the main line of the Florida Central & Peninsular R'y; at Macon, eight miles from Jessamine, with the South Florida Branch of the S. F. & W. R'y (also a through line to the North,) and at St. Petersburg with steamers for Tampa, Port Tampa, Manatee River points, Key West, Havana, Mobile and New Orleans.

At Sanford, St. Petersburg and at Tarpon Springs (about half way between Jessamine and St. Petersburg,) are ice factories, which insures getting the luxury of ice at lowest rates because of competition. Delicious fish and oysters are cheaply obtained from St. Petersburg and other Gulf stations along the S. & St. P. Railway. These are luxuries more or less unknown to most interior points, from lack of railway connection.

From Jessamine to the Gulf of Mexico is about twenty-six miles in an air line, just far enough away to rob the sea winds of their harshness and to impregnate them with the resinous exhalations of the intervening Pine forests—just far enough away to miss all the disagreeable features of the coast, which are rife at certain seasons, and yet near enough to visit it in its delightful moods, for rest and recreation.

One of Jessamine's most valued blessings is remarkable and almost complete immunity from mosquitoes. We *never* see one in the daytime, and often not a hundred during a whole season. When there are any nights, they do not swarm, but appear singly or in twos or threes, and screens will keep them out as at the North. They *never* interfere with sitting on the piazza nights throughout the summer. This is in marked contrast to many sections of the State where Cypress swamps, shallow ponds and ditches offer convenient breeding places, and on the coast at certain seasons of the year they are simply terrific. Neither do we have sand flies, which are another coast pest at certain seasons.

There are no negroes nearer than three miles away, where there is a small settlement of colored people who own their homes and are perfectly peaceable. Not too far away to employ them as laborers, but far enough to escape all the objectionable features connected with them as a people.

Owing to the exceptional elevation and consequent purity of air, no better site for a sanitarium can be found than right here. Such an establishment could be much more economically built and conducted here than in any of the Florida cities, and naturally would be sought by those in search of health and rest instead of social excitement. A small hotel or boarding house would doubtless do exceedingly well if properly managed and advertised, for thousands yearly visit the State who cannot afford to pay the exorbitant rates charged for board in the cities and large villages, and are looking for some such quiet retreat.

Those looking for locations for quiet winter, or all the year around, homes, will do well to investigate our claims for this particular location. Persons in the North earning salaries above actual living expenses, can buy some land here cheap, have it cleared and planted to Oranges, etc., and cared for each year at moderate expense, and not move here until the trees are in bearing, or nearly so. This is much the best plan for those who haven't enough capital to warrant coming and making groves themselves. It is really the most economical and easiest plan in many cases. As in all new and as yet thinly populated countries, the demand for laborers is limited and confined largely to manual work on farms and in Orange groves.

As stated on page 56, there is no better location in the State than this for some capitalist or company of capitalists to invest in and open up to settlers. As a site for a model community, it is an exceptional one. Nature has done more than her share, and man can easily do the rest.

The undersigned stand ready to give any information in their possession, or to lend any assistance possible to any one who may be interested in this location as a place of residence or investment in any way.

PIKE & ELLSWORTH,  
Jessamine,  
Pasco Co.,  
Florida.

## Photographs of Florida Flowers, Fruits and Scenes.



**W**HILE vivid and truthful descriptions give a more or less real conception of the subjects under consideration, when excellent photographs are combined with the descriptions, a more full and certain knowledge is obtained than is possible in any other way except by a visit to and a personal inspection of the scenes depicted. All who are in any way interested in Florida will find in good photographs valuable assistance in forming a correct idea of the scenery and products of the State. In the past we have received frequent inquiries for Florida views, and to supply this demand we have employed the services of one of the finest artists in the South, to prepare a series of photos of the most characteristic representatives of Florida flowers, fruits and scenery. These pictures are thoroughly first-class in every respect, representing the highest degree of photographic art. They are the large Boudoir size, mounted on heavy panel cards, gold-edged, with the title printed underneath. Many of them are exquisite subjects for artists to paint from, while all are invaluable in forming an album of Florida views.

Prices, postpaid, 25 cents each; 6 for \$1.35; or 12 for \$2.60.

No. 1. "VINECLAD," JESSAMINE GARDENS, FLA.—The first building—a cottage—erected at Jessamine. Completely embowered in vines and has been pronounced "a veritable artist's dream." A picture which delights everyone.

No. 2. ONE OF THE APPROACHES TO JESSAMINE GARDENS.—An enchanting bit of forest road, lined with exceptionally fine specimens of the Saw Palm or Palmetto. Very tropical appearing.

No. 3. MIRROR LAKE, JESSAMINE, FLA.—Showing a charming view of one end of the lake on which Jessamine Gardens are located. In the foreground is shown part

of a block of 30,000 Trifoliolate Orange plants, backed by a row of Cannas taller than a man.

No. 4. GATHERING THE GOLDEN FRUIT.—View in an Orange grove, showing the trees full of fruit and the pickers busy at work. A very characteristic and interesting scene.

No. 5. A BUNCH OF BANANAS.—A large clump of Banana plants, in a Lemon grove, from which hangs a bunch of fruit which a man standing beneath is unable to reach. A remarkable sight to Northern eyes.

No. 6. A YOUNG ORANGE GROVE.—Shows how a young pine-land



- Orange grove looks. Residence and lakes showing in the background.
- No. 7. PINEAPPLES.—Shows a field of Pineapples in fruit.
- No. 8. ORANGE TREE BENDING UNDER ITS FRUIT.—Shows a large Orange tree in a grove, with the centre of the tree parted in the middle and the limbs hanging nearly to the ground, on each side, under the weight of fruit.
- No. 9. A BANANA ORCHARD. — Showing young and old plants, the latter holding several bunches of fruit and towering far above the heads of two men standing beneath.
- No. 10. VIEW IN AN ORANGE GROVE.—A young grove just coming into bearing. In one corner a beautiful young Date Palm, and near by the owner leaning on his hoe and holding two Oranges. Residence and Pine trees in the background.
- No. 11. A FLORIDA CABBAGE PATCH.—A revelation to those who think Florida is all worthless sand. Three men stand in the patch, each holding two cabbages, and the latter pretty thoroughly obscure the men. Very tropical growth in the background.
- No. 12. A BRANCH OF ORANGES.—View in an Orange grove, the foreground occupied by a branch so laden with fruit that the lowermost rest on the ground. Very striking.
- No. 13. A BANANA BUD AND BLOOM.—Shows the wonderful inflorescence of the Banana, and the tiny fruits just formed.
- No. 14. BLOOM OF THE SPANISH BAYONET.—Showing on a black background a magnificent cluster of the lovely creamy-white bells of the Spanish Bayonet (*Yucca aloifolia*.)
- No. 15. THE GIANT BAMBOO.—A grand clump of *Bambusa vulgaris*, the large unarmed Bamboo of Bengal. Resembles a gigantic Fern and is very striking and unique.
- No. 16. ONE OF THE DATE PALMS. —A view on a fine private place, with a good-sized Phoenix Palm in the foreground.
- No. 17. PAMPAS GRASS AND CENTURY PLANTS.—An enchanting view on the same private place. Must be seen to be appreciated.
- No. 18. CABBAGE PALMS.—Shows two large-sized Cabbage Palms or Palmettoes, in the foreground, with the St. John's River in the middle, and a group of Palms in the distance.
- No. 19. A PATH THROUGH FLORIDA WOODS.—A path through a very heavy piece of "hammock," with very large Live Oaks, hung with Spanish Moss, in the foreground and back ground. It is *very* pretty.
- No. 20. A RUSTIC BRIDGE over the Palatlahaha River, with river scenery about it. An exceedingly beautiful scene.
- No. 21. A TANGLED MASS OF VINE AND TREE.—A very charming and



tropical appearing bit of woodland, a path disappearing under trees covered with interlacing vines.

No. 22. AN IMMENSE LIVE OAK on St. Joseph's Island, with people up in the tree. An old fisherman lives on the island and uses the tree as a lookout, a series of ladders running to the top. When he wants to fish he goes up to the top of the tree with his telescope and looks off for a spot where the fish are playing and jumping in the water. The waters of the Gulf of Mexico can be seen in the background.

No. 23. THE SILVER KING OR TARPON.—Shows a tarpon (fish) about five feet long, with a gentleman standing beside it.

No. 24. A GNARLED AND TWISTED LIVE OAK.—Presents a most grotesque and quite indescribable appearance. A Cabbage Palm grows up through the snake-like branches, which are hung with streamers of Spanish Moss, and small Palms dot the ground beneath.

No. 25. THE FESTIVE ALLIGATOR is shown chasing a little "nigger" around a big stump. Pleases the children immensely.

No. 26. THE HAUNTED RIVER.—A scene on the Palatlahaka River, showing a bank of wierd-looking Cypress trees, with their reflection in the water, and among these reflections can be distinctly seen three human faces.

No. 27. A FLORIDA HOME.—A beautiful scene, showing the house

with piazza completely draped with vines, and the path leading up to it bordered with giant Cacti, Century Plants, clumps of Spanish Bayonet, Australian Silk Oaks and Palms. Shows the grand possibilities of gardening in Elorida.

No. 28. A FLORIDA LAWN.—In the foreground are two beautiful Date Palms, and between them a man stands beside a Century Plant (*Agave*) which is taller than he, the shrubbery, etc., showing in the background.

No. 29. A FLORIDA CRACKER AND HIS TEAM, consisting of three pairs of oxen which are conspicuous chiefly for their lack of fat, and the brand marks which show very plainly. A beautiful lake forms the background.

No. 30. SOLITUDE.—Shows a road through a Florida forest—"hammock"—with nothing alive in sight. It has an unmistakable look of solitude.

No. 31. THE OLD LOG SCHOOL-HOUSE, shaded by an immense Live Oak draped with Spanish Moss. The log school house is one of the features of Florida fast passing away.

No. 32. RESULT OF A MORNING'S HUNT is a picture of a "colored gemman" on a mule, both typical and taken in the woods. The darkey has his rifle, and across the saddle is a deer, and hanging to his back several squirrels.

No. 33. CRACKERS AND THEIR HOME.—A little log house in the woods, with father, mother, daugh-

ter and son, the latter with his gun, standing outside. Sharp eyes will discover many strange, laughable and interesting features in this picture.

No. 34. A DRAPERY OF MOSS.—A bit of road through a Florida "hammock," completely overarched with trees, from the branches of which hang draperies of the beautiful silvery Spanish Moss. Two men in a wagon drawn by a mule, gives the needed life to a charming glimpse of nature.

No. 35. PINE ISLAND, LAKE APOPKA, is a pretty picture, showing Pine Island in the distance, looking through Cabbage Palms in the foreground.

No. 36. LIGHTHOUSE, EGMONT KEY, on the Gulf coast. At the base of the lighthouse are two or three large Cabbage Palms and Sea Grape (a magnificent semi-tropical shrub).

No. 37. ON PALATLAKA RIVER, is a typical Florida river scene.

No. 38. CAMPERS ON ST. JOSEPH'S ISLAND.—Shows a lot of campers around a fire, with Cabbage Palms and Live Oaks around. A typical outing scene for which Florida is justly famous.

No. 39. MOUTH OF THE ANCLOTE RIVER.—A lovely scene, quite impossible to adequately describe. A picture which never fails to elicit exclamations of admiration.

No. 40. ON THE ANCLOTE RIVER.—A beautiful view of the river and its banks, on which are growing

Cabbage Palms, immense Pines and other vegetation. A tiny steamer and its occupants enliven the scene.

No. 41. THE BAYOU, TARPON SPRINGS, taken from ex-Gov. Safford's windmill.

No. 42. SPONGE SCHOONER AT TARPON SPRINGS.—A fine "study" for a painting.

No. 43. SPONGES ON THE WHARF AT TARPON SPRINGS.—In addition to the heaps of sponges are shown some of the pretty boat-houses around the spring. (This is one of the Florida springs large enough for small vessels to enter.)

No. 44. ON THE ST. JOHN'S RIVER.—A wild and weird scene.

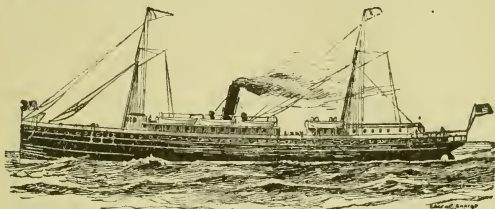
No. 45. A LITTLE PICKANINNY.—A fat and wrinkled colored baby sitting in a white wash-bowl. The way he "shows the whites of his eyes" would upset the gravity of a judge.

No. 46. "AUNTY," HER PICKANINNIES AND HOME AT "POSSUM TROT" (three miles from Jessamine Gardens.) A "colored lady" and her numerous progeny grouped before a cabin which is "fearfully and wonderfully made." The "stick and mud" chimney alone is a marvel and worthy the brush of some artist.

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